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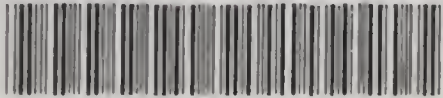
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BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS

OF THE

ILLUSTRIOUS

GENERAL WASHINGTON,

LATE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

CONTAINING

A HISTORY

OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS OF HIS LIFE,

WITH HIS SPEECHES TO CONGRESS,

AND PUBLIC ADDRESSES :

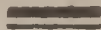


TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN ORATION UPON HIS DEATH,

BY THE REV. SAMUEL STANHOPE SMITH,

President of the College of New-Jersey.



A NEW EDITION, IMPROVED.

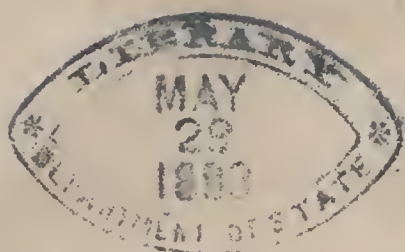


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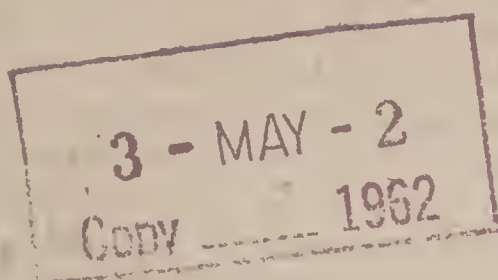


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BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS
OF
GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON, ESQ.

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, &c.

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IN the history of Man, we contemplate with particular satisfaction, those legislators, heroes, and philosophers, whose wisdom, valour, and virtue, have contributed to the happiness of the human species.—We trace the luminous progress of those excellent beings with secret complacency; our emulation is roused, while we behold them steadily pursue the path of rectitude, in defiance of every obstruction; we rejoice that we are of the same species, and thus self-love becomes the hand-maid of virtue.

The authentic pages of biography unite the most grateful amusement with instruction.—Truth supports the dignity of the historic muse, who will not admit of either fulsome panegyric, or invidious censure.—She describes her hero with genuine simplicity—mentions his frailties, his characteristic peculiarities, and his shining qualities.—In short, she gives a faithful and lively portrait of the man, investigates the latent motives of his actions, and celebrates those virtues which have raised him to an enviable pre-eminence above his contemporaries.

We sympathize in the sufferings, and participate the triumphs of those great men who stand

“ Majestic ’mid the monuments of Time ;”

and the approbation of excellence in others, naturally leads the mind to imitate the object of its adoration.

Among those patriots who have a claim to our veneration, George Washington appears in a conspicuous place in the first rank. This illustrious man was born

February 22d, 1732, in the parish of Washington, Westmoreland county, in the state of Virginia. His ancestors were possessed of property in England, near Cave, in the east riding of Yorkshire, which they sold, and came over to America in the year 1657, and purchased lands in King George county, Virginia. His father, Mr. Augustus Washington, was the second in descent after their emigration, and had a numerous offspring. He was possessed of large property, and of distinguished reputation. George was his third son, and the first fruit of his second marriage. He received his education under the eye of his father, from a private tutor, under whom he acquired a knowledge of the Latin language, sufficient for the ordinary purposes of life, his mother-tongue grammatically, and the elements of mathematics, which he, in his rising years, carefully improved by practical experiments in topographical and military plans. When he was but ten years of age, his father died, and, at fifteen, he was entered a midshipman on board a British ship of war then stationed on the coast of Virginia. But after his baggage had been packed up for embarkation, the plan was abandoned, in obedience to the calls of maternal affection. For several years after he quitted his tutor, the learning he had acquired was much improved by a disposition to study, and he particularly applied himself to the practical parts of surveying, a knowledge of which was then, as it is now, very important and necessary to men of landed property in every part of the American continent. His merits in this branch of knowledge, occasioned him being nominated surveyor to a certain district in Virginia, an appointment rather creditable than lucrative ; but which afforded him advantageous opportunities, particularly an acquaintance with the country, the properties of lands, and the situations and direction of creeks and rivers, and it enabled him to make a choice of some valuable tracts of land for subsequent purchase.

After his father died, the charge of the family devolved on his elder brother Lawrence, a young man of the most promising talents ; who, at that time, was a captain, under admiral Vernon, in the colonial troops employed in the expedition against Carthagera ; upon

his return, having come into the possession of his patrimonial estates, in honour of his admiral, from whom he had received many civilities, he named his new mansion *Mount-Vernon*. He was afterwards made adjutant-general of the militia of Virginia, but did not long survive, and on his demise (notwithstanding there were heirs of an elder branch, who possess a large share of the patrimony) the eldest son by the second marriage inherited the part upon which that seat now stands, and a considerable landed property attached to it.

At the death of his brother, the vacant office of adjutant-general was in consequence of the encreased population and extensive limits of the colony, divided into three districts, and the *future Hero of America*, before he was twenty years of age, began his military career, by an appointment to the rank of major in that department.

In 1753, an event occurred, which called his abilities into more active public notice. The jealousies of the French and English governments were at their height. Encroachments were reported to have been made by the former from their settlements in Canada, on the frontier territories of the British colonies, along the rivers Ohio and de Bœuf.* Orders were received from England, by the governor and council of Virginia, to repel by force these encroachments; in consequence of which, lieutenant-governor Dinwiddie dispatched young major Washington, with plenary powers to ascertain the facts, treat with the Indians, and to engage them to continue firm in their attachment to England, and to warn the French to desist from the inroads they were making, in direct violation of the treaties then subsisting between the two crowns. This mission he performed with singular industry, intelligence and address.

The appointment of major Washington was deemed a circumstance somewhat extraordinary at that period; it was said that a youth unacquainted with the enlarged commerce of the world, unexperienced in political concerns, appeared to be unfit to be employed to conduct a negociation, wherein subjects of the greatest

* *French Creek.*

importance were involved : It was true that the subjects were important, for they shortly after became the origin of a war between the two nations, which raged for many years, and extended throughout every part of the globe, and which ended in the final expulsion of the French from the continent.

But those who had formed such superficial notions of the major, were, in the end, deceived by the success and abilities manifested through the whole transaction. This having been the first effort of that career which has terminated with so much splendor in history, and honour and happiness to himself and his country.

On his return from this perilous embassy, with Mons. de St. Pierre's answer, and his good success in the Indian negotiations, major Washington was complimented with the thanks and approbation of his country. His journal does great credit to his industry, attention, and judgment; and it has since proved of infinite service to those who have been doomed to traverse the same inhospitable tracts.

Governor Dinwiddie's letter to the French commandant, and M. de St. Pierre's answer, have been published in several periodical works, both in America and in Britain. The governor's letter stated, that he had heard with surprise and concern, that the French were erecting fortresses and making settlements in the lands upon the river Ohio, which are the property of the crown of Great Britain; in consequence of which, he is induced in the name of the king, to send the bearer, G. Washington, Esq. one of the adjutants-general of the forces of Virginia, to complain of the encroachments made in violation of the treaties subsisting between the two crowns, requesting by whose authority he had marched from Canada with an armed force to invade the British territories, and that the French forces depart peaceably without prosecuting a purpose so interruptive to the harmony which his majesty is so desirous to continue and cultivate with the most christian king. Also, that major Washington might be entertained with the politeness due to his rank. The French commandant's answer only stated, that he would transmit the governor's letter to Canada, to his general, the marquis du Quesne, by

whose answer he would be guided; that he was upon French ground, by the orders of his general, consequently that he could not obey the summons of the governor; and that he had made it his particular care to receive Mr. Washington with the distinction suitable to his dignity.

In 1754, the designs of the French becoming more manifest, and their movements more daring, orders were issued by administration for the colonies to arm and unite in one confederacy. The assembly of Virginia took the lead, by voting a sum of money for the public service, and raising a regiment for the protection of the frontiers of the colony. Of this corps, Mr. Fry, one of the professors of the college, was appointed colonel, and major Washington received the commission of lieutenant colonel. But colonel Fry died without ever having joined; and of course left his regiment to the second in command. He began his march on the 2d of April, from Alexandria, having under his command one hundred and fifty men. His orders were to march towards the Ohio, there to assist captain Trent to build forts, and defend the possessions of his majesty against the attempts and hostilities of the French. During his march, he was joined by a small detachment under command of captain Stephens, and when he had proceeded as far as Wills-Creek, he received intelligence that captain Trent had been obliged to surrender the fort which he had erected between the Ohio and French-Creek, to a body of about eight hundred French, commanded by captain Contre-cœur; whereupon, colonel Washington, deeming it impracticable to march towards the fort without sufficient force, thought it most prudent to proceed to open roads so as to pre-occupy the advantageous post at the confluence of the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers, which in his journal he recommended for that purpose. He was to have been joined by a detachment of independent regulars from the southern colonies, together with some companies of provincials from North Carolina and Maryland. But, perceiving the necessity of expedition, and without waiting for their arrival, he commenced his march; but, notwithstanding his precipitated advance, the French had already taken possession and erected a

fortification, which they named fort *Du Quesne*, in honour of the marquis du Quesé, the French governor of Canada.

Colonel Washington accordingly proceeded on his march from Wills-Creek; bravely encountering all the obstacles and difficulties of an impervious wilderness, crossing mires, savannas, and rivers. His men were sometimes forced to ford rivers so deep, as to keep them up to the arm-pits; when he had proceeded as far as Turkeyfoot, he received information that a party of French, commanded by M. de Jumonville, were concealed within a short distance of his camp; whereupon, he secured his waggon, and put himself in the best means of defence he was capable of, until he had learned the strength of the enemy, and the place where they were.

Having received from the Indians the necessary information, on the night of the 27th May, he set out with his men (except about forty, who were left to guard his ammunition, &c.) and a party of Indians, which the half-king sent to his assistance, under a heavy rain, and a night dark as pitch, they travelled along a path scarcely broad enough for one man; they were sometimes fifteen or twenty minutes out of the path before they could come to it again, and so dark, that they would often strike one against another; all night they continued their route, and in the morning about sun-rise, formed themselves for an engagement, marching one after another in the Indian manner; the enemy did not discover them until they were close upon them, when colonel Washington's company fired, and was supported by Mr. Wagers; these two companies received the whole fire of the French, which lasted a quarter of an hour before the enemy was routed out. M. de Jumonville and nine others were killed, one wounded and twenty-one made prisoners. Among the prisoners was the celebrated woodsman, Mons. de la Force, commissary of the French stores, and two other officers. Only one of the whole party escaped. A Canadian, named Monceau, made such a report of the action as to impress upon the minds of the French, a belief, that colonel Washington's conduct was highly treacherous and dishonourable. The French

account of this engagement is contained in a letter from M. de Contrecoeur to the marquis du Quesne, dated Fort du Quesne, May 23d, 1754. It states that M. de Jumonville set out with a small escort, charged with a written summons, in form of a letter, directed to the first English officer he should meet on the lands claimed by the French king, summoning him to withdraw his troops in peace from said territory, otherwise that they would repel force by force, desiring the English officer to return his answer by M. de Jumonville, and to treat that officer with that distinction and respect which he deserved; that the deputy set out, and next morning found himself surrounded by a number of English and Indians, that the English quickly fired two volleys, which killed some soldiers, that M. Jumonville made a sign that he had a letter from his commander, whereupon the fire ceased, and the English surrounded the French officer, in order to hear it, that as he was reading the summons a second time, he was killed by a musket shot in the head; that had it not been for the Indians, who rushed in between the French and English, the former would have been all assassinated, and that the Indians did not fire upon the French. This report was made the most of by the French, who impressed it upon the minds of the surrounding Indians, as a most shocking and base murder perpetrated by the express command of Colonel Washington. But the following extract from Colonel Washington's Journal, of his proceedings given in to Governor Dinwiddie, places the transaction in a quite different point of view; he states, viz. "We were advanced pretty near to them as we thought, when they discovered us; whereupon I ordered my company to fire, mine was supported by Mr. Wager's, and my company and his, received the whole fire of the French, during the greatest part of the action, which only lasted a quarter of an hour, before the enemy was routed.

"We killed M. de Jumonville, the commander of that party, as also nine others; we wounded one, and made twenty-one prisoners, among whom were M. la Force, M. Droullon, and two Cadets. The Indians scalped the dead, and took away most part of their fire arms, after which we marched on with the prisoners and

guard, to the Indian camp, where again I held a council with the half-king; and there informed him that, the governor was desirous to see him, and was waiting for him at Winchester; he answered, that, he could not go just then, as his people were in too eminent danger from the French, whom they had fallen upon; that he must send messengers to all the allied nations, in order to invite them to take up the hatchet. He sent a young Delaware Indian to the Delaware Nation, and gave him also a French scalp to carry to them. This young man desired to have a part of the presents which were allotted for them, but that the remaining part might be kept for another opportunity: He said he would go to his own family, and to several others, and would wait on them at Mr. Gist's, where he desired men and horses should be sent ready to bring them up to our camp. After this I marched on with the prisoners: They informed me that they had been sent with a summons to order me to depart. A plausible pretence to discover our camp, and to obtain the knowledge of our forces and situation! It was so clear that they were come to reconnoitre what we were, that I admired at their assurance, when they told me they were come as an Embassy; for their instructions mentioned that they should get what knowledge they could of the roads, rivers, and of all the country as far as Potomack: And instead of coming as an ambassador, publicly, and in an open manner, they came secretly, and sought after the most hidden retreats, more like deserters than ambassadors; in such retreats they encamped, and remained hid whole days together, and that, no more than five miles from us: from thence they sent spies to reconnoitre our camp; after this was done, they went back two miles, from whence they sent the two messengers spoken of in the instruction, to acquaint M. de Contrecoeur of the place we were at, and of our disposition, that he might send his detachments to inforce the summons, as soon as it should be given.

“ Besides, an ambassador has princely attendants; whereas this was only a simple petty French officer; an ambassador has no need of spies, his character being always sacred: And seeing their intention was so good, why did they tarry two days, at five miles distance from

us, without acquainting me with the summons, or, at least, with something that related to the embassy? That alone would be sufficient to raise the greatest suspicions, we ought to do them the justice to say, that, as they wanted to hide themselves, they could not pick out better places than they had done.

“The summons was so insolent, and favoured the gasconade so much, that if it had been brought openly by two men, it would have been an immediate indulgence, to have suffered them to return.

“It was the opinion of the half-king in this case, that their intentions were evil, and that it was a pure pretence; that they never intended to come to us but as enemies; and if we had been such fools as to let them go, they would never help us any more to take other Frenchmen.

“They say they called to us as soon as they discovered us, which is an absolute falsehood, for, I was then marching at the head of the company going towards them, and can positively affirm, that, when they first saw us, they ran to their arms, without calling; as I must have heard them, had they so done.”

From the French prisoners, colonel Washington had intelligence, that the French forces on the Ohio consisted of upwards of one thousand regulars, and some hundreds of Indians. Upon this intelligence, and considering his little army which was somewhat reduced, and entirely insufficient to act offensive against the French and Indians he fell back to a place known by the appellation of the *Great Meadows*, for the sake of forage and supplies. Here he built a temporary stockade, merely to cover his stores; it was from its fate called *Fort Necessity*. Colonel Washington was too sensible of the advantages of Fort du Quesne, to abandon the idea of taking it. Ever since he left Wills-Creek, he had been indefatigable in his exertions to form the regiment, open roads, and gain the Indians over to the side of the English, as also to watch the operations of the French, and gain a knowledge of the forts, situation, and forces, even as far as the lakes. He had wrote to the governors of Pennsylvania and Maryland, requesting their aid in the augmentation of his army. He remained at Fort Necessity

for the arrival of some expected succour from New-York and Pennsylvania, unmolested, until July following, when his small force, even after it was joined by capt. M'Kay's regulars did not amount to four hundred effectives, was attacked by an army of French and Indians, computed to have been sixteen hundred strong, under the command of the sieur de Villers, the brother of M. de Jumonville. The chief intention of this campaign, the French officer acknowledged, was to revenge the assassination of his brother, and to hinder any establishments on the lands claimed by the king of France.

The Virginians sustained the attack of the enemy's whole force for several hours, and laid near two hundred of them dead in the field, when the French commander, discouraged by such determined resolution, proposed the less dangerous method of dislodging his enemy by a parley, which ended in a capitulation. It was stipulated that colonel Washington should march away with all the honors of war, and be allowed to carry off all his military stores, effects and baggage. This capitulation was violated from the ungovernable disposition of the Indians, whom the French commander could not restrain from plundering the provincials on the outset of their march, and from making a considerable slaughter of men, cattle and horses. After this disaster the remains of the Virginia regiment returned to Alexandria to be recruited and furnished with necessary supplies: during this period, the French redoubled their activity and diligence on the Ohio, and in other places; and Virginia who determined to send out a larger force, in the spring following, erected the forts Cumberland and London, and formed a camp at Wills-creek, in order to annoy the enemy on the Ohio. In these several services (particularly in the construction of forts) colonel Washington was principally employed.

In 1755, the British government sent to this country, general Braddock, who was appointed to the command of all the troops and forces which were, or that should be raised in, or sent to North America; he landed at Williamsburg, Virginia, in February, with two veteran regiments from Ireland, but sent his men up the Potomack to Alexandria, there to encamp until he was joined

with the independent and provincial corps of America; with this army he was to penetrate through the country to fort Du Quesne (now fort Pitt) by the rout of Wills-creek to repel the French from the confines of the British settlements; and as no person was better acquainted with the frontier country than Colonel Washington, and no one in the colony enjoyed so well established a military character, he was judged to be highly serviceable to general Braddock, but from a royal arrangement of rank, by which "no officer who did not immediately derive his commission from the king, could command one who did," Colonel Washington cheerfully relinquished his regiment and went as an extra aid-de-camp into the family of general Braddock. In this capacity, at the battle of Monongahela, on the 9th of July, 1755, he attended that general, whose life was gallantly sacrificed in attempting to extricate his troops from the fatal ambuscade into which his over-weaning confidence had conducted them. Braddock had several horses shot under him, before he fell himself; and there was not an officer, whose duty obliged him to be on horseback that day, excepting colonel Washington, who was not either killed or wounded. This circumstance enabled him to display greater abilities in covering the retreat and saving the wreck of the army, than he could otherwise have done. As soon as he had secured their passage over the ford of the Monongahela, and found they were not pursued, he hastened to concert measures for their further security with colonel Dunbar, who had remained with the second division and heavy baggage at some distance in the rear. To effect this he travelled with two guides, all night, through an almost impervious wilderness, notwithstanding the fatigues he had undergone in the day, and although he had so imperfectly recovered from sickness, that he was obliged in the morning to be supported with cushions on his horse. The public accounts in Britain and America were not parsimonious of applause for the essential service he had rendered on so trying an occasion.

Not long after this time, the regulation of rank, which had been so injurious to the colonial officers, was changed to their satisfaction, in consequence of the discontent of the officers, and the remonstrance of colonel Wash-

ington. The supreme power of Virginia, impressed with a due sense of his merits, gave him, in a new and extensive commission, the command of all the troops raised and to be raised in that colony.

It would not comport with the intended brevity of this sketch, to mention in detail the plans he suggested or the system he pursued for defending the frontiers, until the year 1758, when he commanded the van brigade of general Forbe's army in the capture of Fort Du Quesne. A similar reason will preclude the recital of the personal hazards and achievements which happened in the course of his service. The tranquillity on the frontiers of the middle colonies having been restored by the success of this campaign, and the health of colonel Washington having become extremely debilitated by an inveterate pulmonary complaint, in 1759 he resigned his military appointment. Authentic documents are not wanting to shew the tender regret which the Virginia line expressed at parting with their commander, and the affectionate regard which he entertained for them.

Shortly after colonel Washington's resignation, his health was gradually re-established and he married Mrs. Custis,* an amiable young widow, said to have possessed a fortune of twenty thousand pounds sterling (about 88,900 dollars) in her own right, besides her dower in one of the principal estates in Virginia. With this lady colonel Washington settled as a planter and farmer on his estate in Fairfax county, Virginia.

After some years he gave up planting tobacco, and went altogether into the farming business. He has raised seven thousand bushels of wheat, and ten thousand of Indian corn in one year. Although he had confined his own cultivation to this domestic tract of about nine thousand acres, yet he possessed excellent lands, in large quantities, in several other counties. His judgment in the quality of soils, his command of money to avail himself of purchases, and his occasional employment in early life as a surveyor, gave him opportunities of making advantageous locations; many of which are much improved.

* General and Mrs. Washington were both born in the same year.

After he left the army, until the year 1774, he thus cultivated the arts of peace. He was constantly a member of assembly, a magistrate of his county and a judge of the court. At this period he was appointed by the assembly of Virginia, in conformity with the universal wish of the people, to be one of their four delegates at the first general Congress of delegates from all the provinces, which met at Philadelphia on the 26th of October, 1774, and consisted of fifty-one members. It was with no small reluctance that he engaged again in the active scenes of life; and we sincerely believe that no motives but such as spring from the most disinterested patriotism, could have prevailed upon him to relinquish the most refined domestic pleasure, which it was ever in his power to command, and the great delight he took in farming and the improvement of his estate.

He was also appointed delegate to the Congress which assembled in 1775, in which it was at length determined, after every step towards an accommodation had failed, and every petition from America had been rejected, to repel by force the invasion from Great-Britain, the eyes of the whole continent were immediately turned upon Mr. Washington. With one common voice he was called forth to the defence of his country; and it is, perhaps, his peculiar glory, that there was not a single inhabitant of these states, except himself, who did not approve the choice, and place the firmest confidence in his integrity and abilities.

He arrived at Cambridge in New-England, in July, 1775, and there took the supreme command of the army of the United Colonies. Previous to this period, hostilities had actually commenced. On the 19th of April, 1775, blood was first shed at the battle of Concord; and on the 17th of June following, the memorable battle of Breed's-hill, commonly called Bunker's-hill was fought.

General Washington was received at the camp with that heart felt exultation, which superior merit alone can inspire, after having, in his progress through the several states, received every mark of affection and esteem, which they conceived were due to the man, whom the whole continent looked up to for safety and freedom.

The following address was presented to him on his accepting the supreme command of the army, by the provincial Congress of New-York, viz.

ADDRESS,

Presented to his excellency General Washington, by the provincial Congress of New-York.

May it please your excellency.

At a time when the most loyal of his majesty's subjects, from a regard to the laws and constitution, by which he sits on the throne, feel themselves reduced to the unhappy necessity of taking up arms, to defend their dearest rights and privileges---while we deplore the calamities of this divided empire, we rejoice in the appointment of a gentleman, from whose abilities and virtue we are taught to expect both security and peace.

Confiding in you, sir, and in the worthy generals immediately under your command, we have the most flattering hopes of success in the glorious struggle for American liberty, and the fullest assurances, that, whenever this important contest shall be decided, by that fondest wish of each American soul, an accommodation with our mother country, you will cheerfully resign the important deposit committed into your hands, and reassume the character of our worthiest citizen.

By order,

P. V. B. LIVINGSTONE, *president.*

New-York, June 26th, 1775.

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S ANSWER.

GENTLEMEN,

At the same time that with you I deplore the unhappy necessity of such an appointment as that with which I am honoured, cannot but feel sentiments of the highest gratitude for this affecting instance of distinction and regard.

May your warmest wishes be realized in the success of America, at this important and interesting period; and be assured that every exertion of my worthy colleagues and myself, will be equally extended to the re-establishment of peace and harmony between the mother country and these colonies; as to the fatal but necessary operations of war, when we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen; and we shall most sincerely rejoice with you in that happy hour, when the establishment of American liberty, on the most firm and solid foundations, shall enable us to return to our private stations, in the bosom of a free, peaceful, and happy country.

G. WASHINGTON.

His conduct as a general and commander in chief is well known. He underwent many hardships, dangers, and difficulties, and conducted his military operations with much skill and ability.

It would not comport with the intended brevity of the present memoirs, for us to particularize all his transactions in the course of the revolutionary war, the impression which they made is yet fresh in the mind of every citizen.

But it is hoped, posterity will be taught in what manner he transformed an undisciplined body of peasantry into a regular army of soldiers. Commentaries on his campaigns would undoubtedly be highly interesting and instructive to future generations. The conduct of his first campaign, in March, 1776, in compelling the British troops to abandon Boston, by a bloodless victory, will merit a minute narration. But a volume would scarcely contain the mortifications he experienced, and the hazards to which he was exposed in the years 1776 and 1777, in contending against the prowess of Britain, with an inadequate force. Her armies were far superior to his in number, well organized and disciplined, inured to a camp life, commanded by officers well experienced in military tactics, and aided by powerful fleets, while his was composed of raw and undisciplined peasants, "just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life--unaccustomed to the din of arms--totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill,"--unused to the subordina-

tion so essentially requisite in an army, and often in want of arms, ammunition, clothes, and even food, often exposed to the inclemency of the weather, in the most rigorous seasons, without tents or even a blanket, and discouraged by the want of regular pay. These circumstances fully account for the unsuccessful issue of his first campaigns.

The battle of Long-Island was fought in August, 1776; his army were driven from their post by the British; above two thousand Americans fell on the field, and about half that number were taken prisoners. Fort Washington, on York-Island, surrendered soon after, with two thousand prisoners: desertion and sickness added to his misfortunes. His army, at the time Lord Howe landed on Long-Island, amounted to twenty-five thousand men, was now reduced to about one eighth of the number.

The approach of winter happily checked the progress of the enemy. General Washington's perseverance and intrepidity improved this circumstance into important advantages. At Trenton, on the morning of the 26th of December, he surprised a body of the enemy's troops, who, finding themselves surrounded, without farther resistance, agreed to lay down their arms.—Twenty-five officers and nearly one thousand soldiers were made prisoners; while the American army had only four or five men wounded.

On the third of January following, at Princeton, he made another successful attempt; there he took three hundred prisoners. These enterprises cheered the drooping spirits of his men, and again added reputation to the American arms. He afterwards retired to Morristown, and remained during the winter, with an inferior force, but with superior skill, checking the enemy from any farther encroachments in that part of the country. We shall not enter into a minute description of the various battles and skirmishes in which he was personally engaged during the campaign of 1777. At the battle of Brandywine, he made a gallant resistance, but was at last forced to quit his ground with the loss of about twelve hundred men killed, wounded, or taken prisoners. At Germantown he was repulsed with the loss of six hun-

dred killed or wounded, and about four hundred prisoners. He afterwards retired to winter quarters at Valley-Forge. His army was at this time in a most miserable condition, marching without stockings or shoes over the frozen ground, their feet were so gashed, that their steps were marked with blood : Some hundreds of them were without blankets ; and in this condition they were in the middle of winter, to sit down in a forest, and build huts for shelter. The destitute situation of the American army at all times, was certainly a means of procrastinating the war ; oftentimes it was upon the eve of dissolution, even mutinies have been the consequence, while want of success prevented many of the soldiers from continuing longer than the period of their short enlistments, and caused frequent desertion. Indeed, nothing but the good destiny and consummate prudence of the commander in chief prevented the want of success from producing want of confidence on the part of the public ; for want of success is apt to lead to the adoption of pernicious counsels, through the levity of the people, or the ambition of their demagogues. In the three succeeding years, the germ of discipline unfolded ; and the resources of America having been called into co-operation with the land and naval armies of France, produced the glorious conclusion of the campaign in 1781. On the nineteenth of October, that year, the army under command of general Washington forced that of the enemy, then under the command of lord Cornwallis, to make a final surrender ; his land forces were made prisoners of war to Congress ; and the naval forces were given up to France. From this time, the gloom began to disappear from our political horizon, and the affairs of the union proceeded in a meliorating train, until a peace was most ably negotiated by our ambassadors in Europe, in 1783, by which thirteen of the American colonies were established as sovereign and independent states.

General Washington having never been in Europe, he could not possibly have seen much military service when the armies of Britain were sent to subdue America ; yet still, for a variety of reasons, he was by much the most proper man on this continent, and probably any where else, to be placed at the head of an American

army. The very high estimation he stood in for integrity and honour, his engaging in the cause of his country from sentiment and a conviction of her wrongs, his moderation in politics, his extensive property, and his approved abilities as a commander, were motives which necessarily obliged the choice of America to fall upon him.

That nature had given him extraordinary military talents, will hardly be controverted by his most bitter enemies; and having been early actuated with a warm passion to serve his country in the military line, he had greatly improved them by unwearied industry, and a close application to the best writers upon tactics, and by a more than common method and exactness; and, in reality, when it comes to be considered, that at first he only headed a body of men entirely unacquainted with military discipline or operations, somewhat ungovernable in temper, and who at best could only be stiled an alert and good militia, acting under very short enlistments, unclothed, unaccoutred, and at all times very ill supplied with ammunition and artillery; and that with such an army he withstood the ravages and progress of nearly forty thousand veteran troops, plentifully provided with every necessary article, commanded by the bravest officers in Europe; and supported by a very powerful navy, which effectually prevented all movements by water; when, we say, all this comes to be impartially considered, we think we may venture to pronounce, that General Washington will be regarded by mankind as one of the greatest military ornaments of the present age, and his name will command the veneration of the latest posterity.

No person, but those who had an opportunity of viewing the continental army, can form any adequate idea of its imperfect state when General Washington first assumed the command, nor was it without the most unwearied application and perseverance, which few men but him, could have undergone, that he was able to establish that discipline which ultimately aided his success. From the period he first assumed the command, until the final dissolution of the army, his care and anxiety for them continued. The army he considered as

his family ; and after the embarrassments of the day, after the toil and fatigues of a battle, we find him stealing a portion of time allotted for rest, devising means the most salutary, for their amelioration, at all times characterized with that economy and frugality which the national resources required.

The following extracts from his official letters to Congress on this subject, are worthy of perusal : they do ample justice to his feelings, and must make a lasting impression in the hearts of his fellow soldiers, viz.

Extract of a letter from General Washington to the honourable Congress, dated Cambridge September 21, 1775.

“IT gives me great pain to be obliged to solicit the attention of the honourable Congress to the state of this army, in terms which imply the slightest apprehension of being neglected. But my situation is inexpressibly distressing, to see the winter fast approaching upon a naked army ; the time of their service within a few weeks of expiring ; and no provision yet made for such important events. Added to these the military chest is totally exhausted : the pay-master has not a single dollar in hand : the commissary-general assures me he has strained his credit, for the subsistence of the army, to the utmost. The quarter-master-general is precisely in the same situation ; and the greatest part of the troops are in a state not far from mutiny, upon the deduction from their stated allowance. I know not to whom I am to impute this failure : but I am of opinion, if the evil is not immediately remedied, and more punctually observed in future, the army must absolutely break up. I hoped I had so fully expressed myself on this subject, (both by letter, and to those members of the congress who honoured the camp with a visit) that no disappointment could possibly happen. I therefore hourly expected advice from the pay-master that he had received a fresh supply, in addition to the hundred and seventy-two thousand dollars delivered him in August : and thought myself warranted to assure the public creditors that in a few days they should be satisfied. But the delay has brought

matters to such a crisis, as admits of no further uncertain expectation. I have therefore sent off this express, with orders to make all possible dispatch. It is my most earnest request that he may be returned with all possible expedition unless the honourable Congress have already forwarded what is so indispensibly necessary."

I have the honour to be, &c.

G. W.

Camp.

LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON, TO THE
PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New-York, July 25, 1776.

SIR,

"DISAGREEABLE as it is to me, and unpleasing as it may be to Congress, to multiply officers, I find myself under the unavoidable necessity of asking an increase of my aides-de-camp. The augmentation of my command; the increase of my correspondence; the orders to give; the instructions to draw; cut out more business than I am able to execute in time with propriety. The business of so many different departments centering with me, and by me to be handed on to Congress for their information; added to the intercourse I am obliged to keep up with the adjacent States; and incidental occurrences; all of which require confidential and not hack writers to execute; renders it impossible, in the present state of things, for my family to discharge the several duties expected of me, with that precision and dispatch that I could wish. What will it be then when we come into a more active scene, and I am called from twenty different places perhaps at the same instant?

"Congress will do me the justice to believe (I hope) that it is not my inclination or wish to run the continent to any unnecessary expense; and those who better know me will not suspect that shew and parade can have any influence on my mind in this instance. A conviction of the necessity of it, for the regular discharge of the trust reposed in me, is the governing motive for the application; and, as such, is submitted to Congress by,

Sir. Your most obedient, &c.

G. W.³²

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New-York, September 2, 1776.

“SIR,

“As my intelligence of late has been rather unfavourable, and would be received with anxiety and concern; peculiarly happy should I esteem myself, were it in my power at this time, to transmit such information to Congress as would be more pleasing and agreeable to their wishes: but, unfortunately for me; unfortunately for them, it is not.

“Our situation is truly distressing. The check our detachment sustained on the twenty-seventh ultimo, has dispirited too great a proportion of our troops, and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to brave and manly opposition, in order to repair our losses, are dismayed, untractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off; in some instances, almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time. This circumstance, of itself, independent of others, when fronted by a well-appointed enemy, superior in number to our whole collected force, would be sufficiently disagreeable: but, when their example has infected another part of the army; when their want of discipline, and refusal of almost every kind of restraint and government, have produced a like conduct but too common to the whole, and an entire disregard of that order and subordination necessary to the well-doing of an army, and which had been inculcated before, as well as the nature of our military establishment would admit of; our condition is still more alarming: and with the deepest concern I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops.

“All these circumstances fully confirm the opinion I ever entertained, and which I more than once in my letters took the liberty of mentioning to Congress, that no dependence could be put in a militia, or other troops than those enlisted and embodied for a longer period than our regulations heretofore have prescribed. I am persuaded, and as fully convinced as I am of any one

fact that has happened, that our liberties must of necessity be greatly hazarded, if not entirely lost, if their defence is left to any but a permanent standing army; I mean, one to exist during the war. Nor would the expense incident to the support of such a body of troops as would be competent to almost every exigency, far exceed that which is daily incurred by calling in succour, and new enlistments, which, when effected, are not attended with any good consequence. Men who have been free, and subject to no control, cannot be reduced to order in an instant: and the privileges and exemptions they claim, and will have, influence the conduct of others; and the aid derived from them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, irregularity, and confusion they occasion.

“ I cannot find that the bounty of ten dollars is likely to produce the desired effect. When men can get double that sum to engage for a month or two in the militia, and that militia frequently called out, is hardly to be expected. The addition of land might have a considerable influence on a permanent enlistment.”

LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Col. Morris's, on the Heights of Haerlem, Sept. 24, 1776.

“ SIR,

“ From the hours allotted to sleep, I will borrow a few moments to convey my thoughts on sundry important matters to Congress. I shall offer them with the sincerity which ought to characterise a man of candour, and with the freedom which may be used in giving useful information, without incurring the imputation of presumption.

“ We are now, as it were, upon the eve of another dissolution of our army. The remembrance of the difficulties which happened upon the occasion last year, the consequences which might have followed the change, if proper advantages had been taken by the enemy, added to a knowledge of the present temper and situation of

the troops, reflect but a gloomy prospect upon the appearances of things now, and satisfy me beyond the possibility of doubt, that, unless some speedy and effectual measures are adopted by Congress, our cause will be lost.

“ It is in vain to expect that any, or more than a trifling part of this army will again engage in the service on the encouragement offered by Congress, when men find that their townsmen and companions are receiving twenty, thirty, and more dollars, for a few months’ service, (which is truly the case) it cannot be expected, without using compulsion; and to force them into the service would answer no valuable purpose. When men are irritated, and the passions inflamed, they fly hastily and cheerfully to arms; but after the first emotions are over * * *, a soldier, reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in, and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience, and acknowledges the truth of your observations, but adds, that it is of no more importance to him than others. The officer makes you the same reply, with this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and family to serve his country, when every member of the community is equally interested and benefited by his labours.

“ It becomes evidently clear then, that as this contest is not likely to be the work of a day,—as the war must be carried on systematically,—and to do it you must have good officers,—there are, in my judgment, no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your army upon a permanent footing, and giving your officers good pay. This will induce gentlemen and men of character to engage: and, till the bulk of your officers are composed of such persons as are actuated by principles of honour and a spirit of enterprise, you have little to expect from them. They ought to have such allowances as will enable them to live like and support the characters of gentlemen. Besides, something is due to the man who puts his life in [*your*] hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the sweets of domestic enjoyment. Why a captain in the continental service should receive no more than five shillings currency per day for performing the same duties that an officer of the same rank in the

British service receives ten shillings sterling for, I never could conceive, especially when the latter is provided with every necessary he requires upon the best terms, and the former can scarce procure them at any rate. There is nothing that gives a man consequence and renders him fit for command, like a support that renders him independent of every body but the state he serves.

“ With respect to the men, nothing but a good bounty can obtain them upon a permanent establishment; and for no shorter time than the continuance of the war, ought they to be engaged; as facts incontestibly prove that the difficulty and cost of enlistments increase with time. When the army was first raised at Cambridge, I am persuaded that the men might have been got, without a bounty, for the war. After this they began to see that the contest was not likely to end so speedily as was imagined, and to feel their consequence by remarking, that, to get in the militia in the course of the last year, many towns were induced to give them a bounty.

“ Foreseeing the evils resulting from this, and the destructive consequences which unavoidably would follow short enlistments, I took the liberty in a long letter (date not now recollected, as my letter book is not here) to recommend the enlistments for and during the war, assigning such reasons for it as experience has since convinced me were well founded. At that time, twenty dollars would, I am persuaded, have engaged the men for this term. But it will not do to look back: and if the present opportunity is slipped, I am persuaded that twelve months more will increase our difficulties fourfold. I shall therefore take the freedom of giving it as my opinion, that a good bounty be immediately offered, aided by the proffer of at least a hundred or a hundred and fifty acres of land, and a suit of clothes and blanket to each non-commissioned officer and soldier; as I have good authority for saying, that, however high the men’s pay may appear, it is barely sufficient, in the present scarcity and dearness of all kinds of goods, to keep them in clothes, much less afford support to their families.

“ If this encouragement then is given to the men, and such pay allowed the officers as will induce gentlemen of character and liberal sentiments to engage, and proper

care and precaution used in the nomination (having more regard to the characters of persons than the number of men they can enlist,) we should in a little time have an army able to cope with any that can be opposed to it, as there are excellent materials to form one out of. But while the only merit an officer possesses is his ability to raise men, while those men consider and treat him as an equal, and (in the character of an officer) regard him no more than a broomstick, being mixed together as one common herd, no order nor discipline can prevail; nor will the officer ever meet with that respect which is essentially necessary to due subordination.

“ To place any dependence upon militia, is assuredly resting upon a broken staff,—men just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life,—unaccustomed to the din of arms,—totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill; which being followed by a want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to troops regularly trained, disciplined, and appointed, superior in knowledge, and superior in arms, makes them timid and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living (particularly in the lodging) brings on sickness in many, impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes, that it not only produces shameful and scandalous desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit into others.

“ Again; men accustomed to unbounded freedom and no controul, cannot brook the restraint which is indispensably necessary to the good order and government of an army; without which, licentiousness and every kind of disorder triumphantly reign. To bring men to a proper degree of subordination is not the work of a day, a month, or even a year: and unhappily for us and the cause we are engaged in, the little discipline I have been labouring to establish in the army under my immediate command, is in a manner done away, by having such a mixture of troops as have been called together within these few months.

“ Relaxed and unfit as our rules and regulations of war are for the government of an army, the militia (those properly so called; for of these we have two sorts, the

six months men, and those sent in as a temporary aid) do not think themselves subject to them, and therefore take liberties which the soldier is punished for. This treats jealousy; jealousy begets dissatisfactions; and these by degrees ripen into mutiny, keeping the whole army in a confused and disordered state; rendering the time of those who wish to see regularity and good order prevail, more unhappy than words can describe. Besides this, such repeated changes take place, that all arrangement is set at nought, and the constant fluctuation of things deranges every plan as fast as adopted.

“ These, sir, Congress may be assured, are but a small part of the inconveniences which might be enumerated, and attributed to militia: but there is one that merits particular attention, and that is the expense. Certain I am, that it would be cheaper to keep fifty or an hundred thousand in constant pay, than to depend upon half the number, and supply the other half occasionally by militia. The time the latter are in pay before and after they are in camp, assembling and marching; the waste of ammunition, the consumption of stores, which, in spite of every resolution or requisition of Congress, they must be furnished with, or sent home; added to other incidental expenses consequent upon their coming and conduct in camp, surpasses all idea, and destroys every kind of regularity and economy which you could establish among fixed and settled troops, and will, in my opinion, prove (if the scheme is adhered to) the ruin of our cause.

“ The jealousies of a standing army, and the evils to be apprehended from one, are remote, and, in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded: but the consequence of wanting one, according to my ideas formed from the present view of things, is certain and inevitable ruin. For, if I was called upon to declare upon oath, whether the militia have been most serviceable or hurtful upon the whole, I should subscribe to the latter. I do not mean by this, however, to arraign the conduct of Congress: in so doing, I should equally condemn my own measures, if I did not my judgment: but experience, which is the best criterion to work by, so fully, clearly and decisively reprobates the practice of trusting to militia, that no man who regards order,

regularity and economy, or who has any regard to his own honour, character, or peace of mind, will risk them upon this issue.

“ An army formed of good officers, moves like clock-work: but there is no situation on earth less enviable nor more distressing than that person’s who is at the head of troops who are regardless of order and discipline, and who are unprovided with almost every necessary. In a word, the difficulties which have forever surrounded me since I have been in the service, and kept my mind constantly upon the stretch,—the wounds which my feelings (as an officer) have received by a thousand things which have happened contrary to my expectation and wishes, * * *—added to a consciousness of my inability to govern an army composed of such discordant parts, and under such a variety of intricate and perplexing circumstances,—induce not only a belief, but a thorough conviction in my mind, that it will be impossible (unless there is a thorough change in our military system) for me to conduct matters in such a manner as to give satisfaction to the public, which is all the recompense I aim at, or ever wished for.

“ Before I conclude, I must apologize for the liberties taken in this letter, and for the blots and scratchings therein, not having time to give it more correctly. With truth I can add, that, with every sentiment of respect and esteem, I am yours and the Congress

most obedient, &c.

G. W.”

LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON, TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS, ON A VISIT TO THE CAMP.

Camp at the Clove, July 19, 1777.

Gentlemen,

“ The little notice I had of your coming to the army, and the shortness of your stay in camp, will more than probably occasion the omission of many matters, which of right ought to be laid before you; and the interruption which my thoughts constantly meet by a

variety of occurrences, must apologize for the rude and indigested manner in which they are offered.

“The completion of the continental regiments is a matter of such infinite importance, that I think no means should be left unessayed to accomplish it. Draughting where the powers of government are adequate, would be the speediest and most effectual: but if it should be thought unadviseable to attempt this mode,—next to it I would recommend that the business of recruiting should be taken entirely out of the hands of the officers of the army, and that each state should appoint some person of known activity (one for instance, who has been a good under-shériff) in each county or township, not only to recruit, but to apprehend deserters: these persons to be liberally rewarded for each recruit, and deserter whom they shall deliver, at stated periods and places, to officers appointed to receive, discipline, and march them to the army; none of these recruiters to have the smallest power to act out of their own districts, but to be absolutely fixed to them.

“A mode of this kind would, in my humble opinion, be less burthensome to the public than the present; prevent the idle habits which recruiting officers contract, not only injurious to themselves, but to others; the most effectual means which can be devised for the recovery of deserters; the surest way of keeping your regiments of equal strength, and of making the duty more equal in the detail of it: in a word, many valuable advantages would result from it, whilst I can suggest but one reason against it; and that, (fully satisfied I am) when weighed in the scale of interest, will not operate; I mean, the keeping so many officers in the camp, who might be spared from the duties of the field till the regiments are stronger than at present. The sixteen additional regiments labour under such disadvantages in some states, as to render the interposition of Congress, in some shape or other, indispensably necessary.

“With respect to food, considering we are in such an extensive and abundant country, no army was ever worse supplied than ours, with many essential articles of it. Our soldiers, the greatest part of last campaign and the whole of this, have scarcely tasted any kind of vegetables,

had but little salt; and vinegar which would have been a tolerable substitute for vegetables, they have been in a great measure strangers to. Neither have they been provided with proper drink : beer or cider seldom comes within the verge of the camp, and rum in much too small quantities. Thus, to devouring large quantities of animal food, untempered by vegetables or vinegar, or by any kind of drink but water, and eating indifferent bread, (but for this, a remedy is provided) are to be ascribed the many putrid diseases incident to the army, and the lamentable mortality that attended us last campaign. If these evils can be remedied, the expense and trouble ought not to be obstacles. Though some kinds of vegetables are not to be had, others are, which, together with sour crout and vinegar, might easily be had, if proper persons acquainted with the business were employed therein.

“ Soap is another article in great demand, the continental allowance is too small : and, dear as every necessary of life is now got, a soldier’s pay will not enable him to purchase ; by which means his consequent dirtiness adds not a little to the diseases of the army.

“ I have no reason to accuse the clothier-general of inattention to his department ; and therefore, as his supplies are incompetent to the wants of the army, I am to suppose his resources are unequal. Ought not each state then to be called upon to draw such supplies from the country manufactories, as can be afforded ? particularly of shoes, stockings, shirts, and blankets, articles indispensably necessary, and of which scarce too many can be provided : in the mean while every provision to be making, for clothing the troops uniformly and warm in the winter. It is a maxim that needs no elucidation, that nothing can be of more importance in an army, than the clothing and feeding it well. On these the health, comfort, and spirits of the soldiers essentially depend ; and it is a melancholy fact, that the American army are miserably defective in both these respects. The distress most of them are in for want of clothing is painful to humanity, dispiriting to themselves, and discouraging to every officer. It makes every pretension to the preservation of cleanliness impossible, exposes them to a va-

riety of disorders, and abates or destroys that military pride without which nothing can be expected from any army.

“ The consequence of giving rank indiscriminately is much to be dreaded : great dissatisfaction has already arisen on account of bestowing this on officers in the civil departments of the army, on the inferior staff, waggon-masters, &c. who, by custom, propriety, and every other motive, are excluded from it in all well-regulated armies. The too great liberality practised in this respect will destroy the pride of rank where it ought to exist, and will not only render it cheap, but contemptible. It is the policy of all armies to make it valued and respected, as a stimulus to emulation, and an incitement to bold and gallant undertakings : it must be very unadvisably, therefore, in our infant state of war, to adopt novel customs to bring it into discredit ; which must and will be the consequence of making it too common, besides the disgust it creates in others.

“ An auditor of accounts, to be constantly with the army, is absolutely requisite. It is absolutely impossible for me, crowded as I am with other business, to examine and adjust the numerous complex accounts of the army with that correctness the public have a right to expect, before warrants pass for payment ; and, without doing it, great impositions may follow. The provision for making regimental pay-masters regulate all regimental accounts, is altogether incompetent to the end proposed from it : for these men being appointed generally agreeable to the recommendation of the field officers of the regiments they belong to ; associating constantly with the officers of their corps, and in a great measure under their control ; cannot be considered as sufficiently uninfluenced ; nor are auditors at a distance from the army of much use, as it would require a delay not admissible, to send accounts to them to audit before they were passed and paid in consequence of warrants from the commander in chief of the army.

“ A good geographer, to survey the roads and take sketches of the country where the army is to act, would be extremely useful, and might be attended with exceeding valuable consequences. He might with propri-

ety have the chief direction of the guides, and must have a head, to procure, govern, and pay them. If such a person should be approved of, I would beg leave to recommend Mr. Robert Erskine, who is thoroughly skilled in this business, has already assisted us in making maps of the country, and has (as I am informed) uniformly supported the character of a fast friend to America.

“ A small travelling press, to follow head-quarters, would be productive of many eminent advantages. It would enable us to give speedy and exact information of any military transactions that take place, with proper comments upon them, and thereby frustrate the pernicious tendency of falsehood and misrepresentation, which, in my opinion, of whatever complexion they may be, are, in the main, detrimental to our cause. If the people had a channel of intelligence, that, from its usual authenticity, they could look up to with confidence, they might often be preserved from that despondency which they are apt to fall into, from the exaggerated pictures our enemies and their emissaries among us commonly draw of any misfortunes we meet with—and from that diffidence of truths favourable to us, which they must naturally feel from the frequent deception they are exposed to, by the extravagant colourings our friends often give to our successes. It would also be very useful to dispatch business in camp, being the most expeditious means of taking copies of orders or other matters that require to be dispersed, and would save a good deal in returns and other papers we are often obliged to get printed in Philadelphia. An ingenious man to accompany this press, and be employed wholly in writing for it, might render it singularly beneficial.

“ I am exceedingly embarrassed how to dispose of the French officers in general, but more especially the artillery officers, who are come out under the sanction of a compact. I can think of no other way than that of forming a separate corps of them, and draughting men from the whole line to compose that corps: but even this will be attended with many disagreeable effects; among others, this is not the least, that officers will think themselves much injured to have the men they have had the trouble of raising taken from them, and given

to others. There is something in this which is discouraging, and breaks the spirit of a good officer, who prides himself in having a full and complete corps.

“ A doubt has arisen, whether a person who belongs to any of the United States of America, and who owed allegiance to any of the said states—that went to the enemy some time past, and since that time has been lurking about any of the fortifications, or about any of the encampments of the armies of the United States, plundering and driving off cattle to the enemy, recruiting for them, or committing any other atrocious crime, or who is appointed an officer in the enemy’s army—can be tried by a general court-martial, under the resolution of Congress of the 21st of August, 1776, and punished as a spy.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.

G. W.”

Correspondence between GENERAL WASHINGTON and GENERAL GAGE, respecting the bad treatment of prisoners.

LETTER FROM HIS EXCELLRNCY GENERAL WASHINGTON, TO GENERAL GAGE.

Head-Quarters, Cambridge, August 11, 1775.

“ Sir,

“ I understand that the officers, engaged in the cause of liberty and their country, who, by the fortune of war, have fallen into your hands, have been thrown indiscriminately into a common gaol, appropriated for felons—that no consideration has been made for those of the most respectable rank, when languishing with wounds and sickness—that some of them have been amputated in this unworthy situation.

“ Let your opinion, sir, of the principle which actuates them be what it may, they suppose they act from the noblest of all principles, a love of freedom and their country. But political opinions, I conceive, are foreign to this point. The obligations arising from the right of humanity and claims of rank, are universally binding

and extensive, except in case of retaliation. These, I should have hoped, would have dictated a more tender treatment of those individuals whom chance or war had put in your power. Nor can I forbear suggesting its fatal tendency to widen that unhappy breach, which you, and those ministers under whom you act, have repeatedly declared you wish to see for ever closed.

“ My duty now makes it necessary to apprise you, that for the future I shall regulate my conduct towards those gentlemen of your army who are, or may be in our possession, exactly by the rule you may observe towards those of ours who may be in your custody.

“ If severity and hardship mark the line of your conduct, (painful as it may be to me) your prisoners will feel its effects; but if kindness and humanity are shown to ours, I shall, with pleasure, consider those in our hands only as unfortunate, and they shall receive from me that treatment to which the unfortunate are ever entitled.

“ I beg to be favoured with an answer as soon as possible, and am, sir,

Your very humble servant,

G. WASHINGTON.”

His Excellency General Gage.

ANSWER:

Boston, August 13, 1775.

“ Sir,

“ To the glory of civilized nations, humanity and war have been compatible; and compassion to the subdued is become almost a general system.

“ Britons, ever pre-eminent in mercy, have outgone common examples, and overlooked the criminal in the captive. Upon these principles your prisoners, whose lives, by the laws of the land, are destined to the cord, have hitherto been treated with care and kindness, and more comfortably lodged, than the king's troops, in the hospitals; indiscriminately, it is true, for I acknowledge no rank that is not derived from the king.

“My intelligence from your army would justify severe recrimination. I understand there are some of the king’s faithful subjects, taken some time since by the rebels, labouring like Negro slaves, to gain their daily subsistence, or reduced to the wretched alternative, to perish by famine, or take arms against their king and country. Those, who have made the treatment of the prisoners in my hands, or of your other friends in Boston, a pretence for such measures, found barbarity upon falsehood.

“I would willingly hope, sir, that the sentiments of liberality which I have always believed you to possess, will be exerted to correct their misdoings. Be temperate in political disquisitions; give free operation to truth, and punish those who deceive and misrepresent; and not only the effects, but the causes of this unhappy conflict will soon be removed.

“Should those, under whose usurped authority you act, controul such a disposition, and dare to call severity retaliation, to God, who knows all hearts, be the appeal for the dreadful consequences. I trust, that British soldiers, asserting the rights of the state, the laws of the land, the being of the constitution, will meet all events with becoming fortitude. They will court victory with the spirit their cause inspires, and from the same motive, will find the patience of martyrs under misfortunes.

“Till I read your insinuations in regard to ministers, I conceived that I had acted under the king; whose wishes, it is true, as well as those of his ministers, and of every honest man, have been to see this unhappy breach forever closed; but unfortunately for both countries, those who have long since projected the present crisis, and influence the councils of America, have views very distant from accommodation. I am, sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,

THOMAS GAGE.”

George Washington, Esq.

REPLY.

*Head-Quarters, Cambridge,
August 19, 1775.*

“ Sir,

“ I addressed you on the 11th instant, in terms which gave the fairest scope for the exercise of that humanity and politeness, which were supposed to form a part of your character. I remonstrated with you on the unworthy treatment shewn to the officers and citizens of America, whom the fortune of war, chance, or a mistaken confidence, had thrown into your hands.

“ Whether British or American mercy, fortitude and patience, are most pre-eminent,—whether our virtuous citizens, whom the hand of tyranny has forced into arms, to defend their wives, their children, and their property, or the mercenary instruments of lawless domination, avarice and revenge, best deserve the appellation of rebels, and the punishment of that cord, which your affected clemency has forborn to inflict—whether the authority under which I act, is usurped, or founded on the genuine principles of liberty, were altogether foreign to the subject. I purposely avoided all political disquisition; nor shall I now avail myself of those advantages, which the sacred cause of my country, of liberty and human nature, give me over you; much less shall I stoop to retort any invective. But the intelligence, you say you have received from our army, requires a reply. I have taken time, sir, to make a strict inquiry, and find that it has not the least foundation in truth. Not only your officers and soldiers have been treated with a tenderness due to fellow-citizens and brethren, but even those execrable paricides, whose counsels and aid have deluged their country in blood, have been protected from the fury of a justly enraged people. Far from compelling or permitting their assistance, I am embarrassed with the numbers who croud to our camp, animated with the purest principles of virtue and love of their country. You advise me to give free operation to truth; to punish misrepresentation and falsehood. If experience stamps value upon counsel, yours must have a weight which few can claim. You best can tell how far the convulsion, which has

brought such ruin on both countries, and shaken the mighty empire of Britain to its foundation, may be traced to these malignant causes.

“ You affect, sir, to despise all rank, not derived from the same source with your own. I cannot conceive one more honourable, than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people, the purest source and original fountain of all power.—Far from making it a plea for cruelty, a mind of true magnanimity and enlarged ideas, would comprehend and respect it.

“ What may have been the ministerial views which have precipitated the present crisis, Lexington, Concord, and Charlestown, can best declare. May that God, to whom you then appealed, judge between America and you. Under his providence, those who influence the councils of America, and all the other inhabitants of the united colonies, at the hazard of their lives, are determined to hand down to posterity, those just and invaluable privileges which they received from their ancestors.

“ I shall now, sir, close my correspondence with you, perhaps for ever. If your officers, our prisoners, receive a treatment from me, different from what I wished to shew them, they and you will remember the occasion of it.

“ I am, sir,

“ Your very humble servant,

“ G. WASHINGTON.”

“ *General Gage.*”

The preceding letters will ever convey to the world, a sufficient testimony of the attention and care, which, at all times, General Washington extended to the soldiers under his command. The whole of his official letters are uniformly characterized with those tender and sympathetic pictures, which the appearance of real want in others impress on a lively and feeling mind, and which was the best calculated to rouse in the minds of Congress, a sense of the sufferings of those who were sacrificing their ease, and risking their lives to establish the independence of their country. Observe the extreme modesty

which he assumes, when he requests for himself, even an aid-de camp, which the multiplicity of his cares rendered essential,—contrast it with that freedom with which he delivers his opinion on other subjects which regard the comfort of his fellow soldiers only—and with the manly language in which he addresses General Gage, for his ill treatment to those whom the misfortune of war placed in his power—Then we behold the citizen—the General.

To those ungrateful few, who, stimulated by malice, have heretofore endeavoured to sully his honour and military reputation, and to impress upon the public mind, the ungenerous idea, that he was instrumental to the shedding of innocent blood, and inflicting wanton cruelty upon the prisoners of the enemy, we recommend a perusal of his letters to Congress upon that subject: there they will find him combating the idea with the language of reason, and censuring the inhuman practice. The historians of the American war have uniformly represented the case of Major André as an example of inhuman murder on the part of America. On this occasion, General Washington sacrificed his own feelings to the “necessities of inexorable justice.” The sentence was pronounced with much hesitation, and, at its execution, he was seen to shed tears.—Nor is it necessary for us to remind them of his fortitude to withstand the threats, or virtue to scorn the bribes of the emissaries of the British Cabinet; for one uniform principle of prudence and wisdom seems to have regulated every transaction of his life.

When General Washington received the joyful intelligence of peace, he expressed himself to the army who had accompanied him through the dangers, toils and difficulties of this glorious struggle, in the following address:

ORDERS ISSUED BY GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THE
ARMY.

Head-Quarters, April 18, 1783.

The Commander in Chief orders the cessation of hostilities between the United States of America and the

King of Great Britain, to be publicly proclaimed to-morrow, at twelve o'clock, at the new building; and that the proclamation, which will be communicated herewith, be read to-morrow evening at the head of every regiment and corps of the army; after which the chaplains, with the several brigades, will render thanks to the Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his over-ruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations.

“ Although the proclamation before alluded to extends only to the prohibition of hostilities, and not to the annunciation of a general peace, yet it must afford the most rational and sincere satisfaction to every benevolent mind, as it puts a period to a long and doubtful contest, stops the effusion of human blood, opens the prospect to a more splendid scene, and, like another morning star, promises the approach of brighter day than hath hitherto illuminated the western hemisphere. On such a happy day, which is the harbinger of peace, a day which completes the eighth year of the war, it would be ingratitude not to rejoice; it would be insensibility not to participate in the general felicity.

“ The Commander in Chief, far from endeavouring to stifle the feelings of joy in his own bosom, offers his most cordial congratulations on the occasion to all the officers of every denomination; to all the troops of the United States in general; and, in particular, to those gallant and persevering men who had resolved to defend the rights of their invaded country, so long as the war should continue. For these are the men who ought to be considered as the pride and boast of the American army; and who, crowned with well-earned laurels, may soon withdraw from the field of glory to the more tranquil walks of civil life. While the Commander in Chief recollects the almost infinite variety of scenes through which we have past, with a mixture of pleasure, astonishment, and gratitude; while he contemplates the prospects before us with rapture, he cannot help wishing that all the brave men, of whatever condition they may be, who have shared the toils and dangers of effecting this glorious revolution; of rescuing millions from the hand of oppression, and of laying the foundation of a great empire, might be impressed with

a proper idea of the dignified part they have been called to act, under the smiles of Providence, on the stage of human affairs; for happy, thrice happy! shall they be pronounced hereafter, who have contributed any thing, who have performed the meanest office in erecting this stupendous FABRICK OF FREEDOM AND EMPIRE on the broad basis of independency; who have assisted in protecting the rights of human nature, and establishing an asylum for the poor and oppressed of all nations and religions.—The glorious task for which we at first flew to arms being accomplished—the liberties of our country being fully acknowledged and firmly secured by the smiles of Heaven on the purity of our cause, and the honest exertions of a feeble people, determined to be free, against a powerful nation disposed to oppress them; and the character of those who have persevered through every extremity of hardship, suffering, and danger, being immortalized by the illustrious appellation of the *patriot army*, nothing now remains but for the actors of this mighty scene to preserve a perfect unvarying consistency of character through the very last act, to close the drama with applause; and to retire from the military theatre with the same approbation of angels and men which have crowned all their former virtuous actions. For this purpose, no disorder or licentiousness must be tolerated.—Every considerate and well-disposed soldier must remember it will be absolutely necessary to wait with patience until peace shall be declared, or Congress shall be enabled to take proper measures for the security of the public stores, &c. As soon as these arrangements shall be made, the General is confident there will be no delay in discharging, with every mark of distinction and honour, all the men enlisted for the war, who will then have faithfully performed their engagements with the public. The General has already interested himself in their behalf, and he thinks he need not repeat the assurance of his disposition to be useful to them on the present and every other proper occasion. In the mean time, he is determined that no military neglects or excesses shall go unpunished while he retains the command of the army.

The Adjutant-General will have such working par-

ties detached, to assist in making the preparations for a general rejoicing, as the chief Engineer with the army shall call for; and the Quarter-Master-General will, without delay, procure such a number of discharges to be printed as will be sufficient for all the men enlisted for the war—he will please to apply to head-quarters for the form.—An extra ration of liquor to be issued to every man to-morrow, to drink, “Perpetual Peace and Happiness to the United States of America.”

The following resolutions were passed by Congress, on the 7th of August, 1783, viz.

BY THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

“*Resolved unanimously*, Ten States being present,

“That an Equestrian Statue of General Washington be erected at the place where the residence of Congress shall be established:

“*Resolved*, That the statue be of bronze, the General to be represented in a Roman dress, holding a truncheon in his right hand, and his head encircled in a laurel wreath: the statue to be supported by a marble pedestal, on which are to be represented, in basso relievo, the following principal events of the war, in which General Washington commanded in person, viz.—The Evacuation of Boston—The Capture of the Hessians at Trenton—The Battle of Princeton—The action of Monmouth—and the surrender of York. On the upper part of the front of the pedestal to be engraved as follows: “The United States in Congress assembled, ordered this statue to be erected in the year of our Lord 1783, in the honour of George Washington, the illustrious commander in chief of the armies of the United States of America, during the war, which vindicated and secured their liberty, sovereignty, and independence.”

“*Resolved*, That a statue conformable to the above plan, be executed by the best artist in Europe, under the superintendence of the Minister of the United States at the court of Versailles, and that money to defray the

expense of the same be furnished from the Treasury of the United States.

“ *Resolved*, That the Secretary of Congress transmit to the Minister of the United States at the court of Versailles, the best resemblance of General Washington that can be procured, for the purpose of having the above statue erected, together with the fittest description of the events which are to be the subject of the basso relievo.”

On the 26th of August, 1783, general Washington, at the request of Congress, proceeded to Princeton, where the Congress was then sitting, and being introduced by two members, the President addressed him as follows, viz.

“ Sir,

“ Congress feel particular pleasure in seeing your Excellency, and in congratulating you on the success of a war in which you have acted so conspicuous a part :

“ It has been the singular happiness of the United States, that, during a war so long, so dangerous, and so important, Providence has been graciously pleased to preserve the life of a general, who has merited and possessed the uninterrupted confidence and affection of his fellow-citizens. In other nations, many have performed services for which they have deserved and received the thanks of the public ; but to you, sir, peculiar praise is due : your services have been essential in acquiring and establishing the freedom and independence of your country ; they deserve the grateful acknowledgments of a free and independent nation : those acknowledgments Congress have the satisfaction of expressing to your Excellency.

“ Hostilities have now ceased, but your country still needs your services ; she wishes to avail herself of your talents in forming the arrangements which will be necessary for her in the time of peace ; for this reason, your attendance at Congress has been requested. A Committee is appointed to confer with your Excellency, and to receive your assistance in preparing and adjusting plans relative to those important objects.”

To which his Excellency made the following

REPLY.

“ Mr. President,

“ I am too sensible of the honourable reception I have now experienced, not to be penetrated with the deepest feelings of gratitude.

“ Notwithstanding Congress appear to estimate the value of my life beyond any services I have been able to render the United States, yet I must be permitted to consider the wisdom and unanimity of our national councils, the firmness of our citizens, and the patience and bravery of our troops, which have produced so happy a termination of the war, as the most conspicuous effect of the Divine interposition, and the surest presage of our future happiness.

“ Highly gratified by the favourable sentiments which Congress are pleased to express of my past conduct, and amply rewarded by the confidence and affection of my fellow-citizens, I cannot hesitate to contribute my best endeavours towards the establishment of the national security in whatever manner the sovereign power may think proper to direct, until the ratification of the definitive treaty of peace, or the final evacuation of our country by the British forces; after either of which events, I shall ask permission to retire to the peaceful shade of private life.

“ Perhaps, sir, no occasion may offer more suitable than the present, to express my humble thanks to God, and my grateful acknowledgments to my country, for the great and uniform support I have received in every vicissitude of fortune, and for the many distinguished honours which Congress have been pleased to confer upon me in the course of the war.”

After the final conclusion of the peace in 1783, a proclamation was issued by Congress, October 18th, directing the discharge of the army; whereupon general Washington, before he resigned his important charge, deliver-

ed the following elegant and pathetic farewell address, to the officers and soldiers, under his command, viz.

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ORDERS, TO THE
ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

Rocky-Hill, near Princeton, November 2, 1783.

The United States in Congress assembled, after giving the most honourable testimony to the federal armies, and presenting them with the thanks of their country, for their long, eminent, and faithful services--having thought proper, by their proclamation, bearing date the 18th of October last, to discharge such part of the troops as were engaged for the war, and to permit the officers on furlough to retire from service, from and after to-morrow, which proclamation having been communicated in the public papers for the information and government of all concerned; it only remains for the commander in chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the United States (however widely dispersed the individuals who composed them may be) and bid them an affectionate--a long farewell.

But before the commander in chief takes his final leave of those he holds most dear, he wishes to indulge himself a few moments in calling to mind a slight review of the past--he will then take the liberty of exploring, with his military friends, their future prospects; of advising the general line of conduct which, in his opinion, ought to be pursued; and he will conclude the address, by expressing the obligations he feels himself under for the spirited and able assistance he has experienced from them, in the performance of an arduous office.

A contemplation of the complete attainment, at a period earlier than could have been expected, of the object for which we contended, against so formidable a power, cannot but inspire us with astonishment and gratitude. The disadvantageous circumstances on our part, under which the war was undertaken, can never be forgotten. The singular interpositions of Providence, in our feeble condition, were such as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving; while the unparalleled perseverance of the armies of the United States,

through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, for the space of eight long years, was little short of a standing miracle.

It is not the meaning, nor within the compass of this address, to detail the hardships peculiarly incident to our service, or to describe the distresses, which, in several instances, have resulted from the extremes of hunger and nakedness, combined with the rigours of an inclement season; nor is it necessary to dwell on the dark side of our past affairs. Every American officer and soldier must now console himself for any unpleasant circumstances which may have occurred by the recollection of the uncommon scenes in which he has been called to act no inglorious part, and the astonishing events of which he has been a witness; events which have seldom, if ever before, taken place on the stage of human action, nor can they probably ever happen again. For, who has before seen a disciplined army formed at once from such raw materials? Who that was not a witness, could imagine, that the most violent local prejudices would cease so soon, and that men who came from the different parts of the continent, strongly disposed, by the habits of education, to despise and quarrel with each other, would instantly become but one patriotic band of brothers? or who that was not on the spot, can trace the steps, by which such a wonderful revolution has been effected, and such a glorious period put to all our warlike toils?

It is universally acknowledged that the enlarged prospects of happiness, opened by the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, almost exceed the power of description: and shall not the brave men who have contributed so essentially to these inestimable acquisitions, retiring victorious from the field of war to the field of agriculture, participate in all the blessings which have been obtained? In such a republic, who will exclude them from the rights of citizens, and the fruits of their labours? In such a country, so happily circumstanced, the pursuits of commerce and the cultivation of the soil will unfold to industry the certain road to competence. To those hardy soldiers, who are actuated by the spirit of adventure, the fisheries will afford ample and profitable employment; and the extensive and fertile regions

of the west will yield a most happy asylum to those, who, fond of domestic enjoyment, are seeking for personal independence. Nor is it possible to conceive that any one of the United States will prefer a national bankruptcy, and a dissolution of the union, to a compliance with the requisitions of Congress and the payment of its just debts—so that the officers and soldiers may expect considerable assistance, in recommencing their civil occupations, from the sums due to them from the public, which must and will most inevitably be paid.

In order to effect this desirable purpose, and to remove the prejudices which may have taken possession of the minds of any of the good people of the states, it is earnestly recommended to all the troops, that, with strong attachment to the union, they should carry with them into civil society the most conciliating dispositions; and that they should prove themselves not less virtuous and useful as citizens, than they have been persevering and victorious as soldiers. What though there should be some envious individuals, who are unwilling to pay the debt the public has contracted, or to yield the tribute due to merit, yet let such unworthy treatment produce no invective, or any instance of intemperate conduct—let it be remembered, that the unbiassed voice of the free citizens of the United States has promised the just reward, and given the merited applause; let it be known and remembered, that the reputation of the federal armies is established beyond the reach of malevolence, and let a consciousness of their achievements and fame still incite the men who composed them, to honourable actions, under the persuasion, that the virtues of economy, prudence, and industry, will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valour, perseverance and enterprize, were in the field. Every one may rest assured, that much, very much, of the future happiness of the officers and men, will depend upon the wise and manly conduct which shall be adopted by them, when they are mingled with the great body of the community. And, although the general has so frequently given it as his opinion, in the most public and explicit manner, that unless the principles of the federal government were properly supported, and the powers of the union increas-

ed, the honour, dignity, and justice of the nation would be lost for ever; yet he cannot help repeating on this occasion so interesting a sentiment, and leaving it as his last injunction to every officer and soldier, who may view the subject in the same serious point of light, to add his best endeavours, to those of his worthy fellow citizens, towards effecting these great and valuable purposes, on which our very existence as a nation so materially depends.

The commander in chief conceives little is now wanting to enable the soldier to change his military character into that of the citizen, but that steady and decent tenor of behaviour, which has generally distinguished, not only the army under his immediate command, but the different detachments and separate armies, through the course of the war. From their good sense and prudence he anticipates the happiest consequences—and while he congratulates them on the glorious occasion which renders their services in the field no longer necessary, he wishes to express the strong obligations he feels himself under, for the assistance he has received from every class, and in every instance. He presents his thanks in the most serious and affectionate manner to the general-officers, as well for their counsel on many interesting occasions, as for their ardour in promoting the success of the plans he had adopted; to the commandants of regiments and corps, and to the other officers, for their great zeal and attention in carrying his orders promptly into execution; to the staff, for their alacrity and exactness in performing the duties of their several departments; and to the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers, for their extraordinary patience in suffering as well as their invincible fortitude in action; to the various branches of the army, the general takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his inviolable attachment and friendship. He wishes more than bare professions were in his power, that he was really able to be useful to them all in future life. He flatters himself, however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him, has been done. And being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave, in a short time, of the military char-

acter—and to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honour to command—he can only again offer, in their behalf, his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favours, both here and hereafter, attend those, who, under the Divine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others! With these wishes, and this benediction, the commander in chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn—and the military scene to him will be closed for ever.

E. HAND, *adj. gen.*

To the preceding address the officers of the part of the army remaining on the banks of the Hudson, returned a suitable answer; they thanked the commander in chief for the communication of his affectionate assurances of his inviolable attachment and friendship; they assured his Excellency that although as yet his endeavours to ensure to the armies the just reward of their services, had failed of success, they were convinced that it had arisen from causes which it was not in his power to controul, and should the contemplated measure never be attained, that their patriotism should still remain unshaken: They were happy in the opportunity of congratulating his Excellency on the certain conclusion of the *Definitive Treaty of Peace*, assuring him that, relieved at last from long suspense, their warmest wish was to return to the bosom of their country, to resume the character of citizens; and that it should be their highest ambition to become useful ones. To his Excellency they were convinced that this great event must be peculiarly pleasing; because, while at the head of the armies, urged by patriotic virtues and magnanimity, he persevered, under the pressure of every possible difficulty and discouragement, in the pursuit of the great objects of the war—the freedom and safety of his country;—his heart panted for the tranquil enjoyments of peace. They concluded with sincere prayers to God, long to bestow happiness to their commander,

and that when he quits the stage of human life, he may receive from the UNERRING JUDGE, the rewards of valour exerted to save the oppressed, of patriotism and disinterested virtue.

On the 25th of November, 1783, New-York was evacuated by the British army; same day the American troops marched in, and took possession of the city; after which General Washington and the governor made their public entry. The arrangement and the whole conduct of the march and the tranquility which succeeded it through the day and night, was admirable! and the grateful citizens, feeling the most affectionate impressions from the elegant and efficient disposition which prevailed through the whole event, on their returning from exile, addressed his excellency the commander in chief in behalf of themselves and their suffering brethren, looking up to him with unusual joy: they welcomed him to the city, long torn from them by the hand of oppression, but which by his wisdom, under the guidance of Providence, had again been rendered the seat of peace and freedom; they assured him that they should preserve, to the last, their gratitude for his services and veneration for his character, and required him "to accept of their sincere and earnest wishes, that he may long enjoy that calm domestic felicity, which he had so generously sacrificed; that the cries of injured liberty may never more interrupt his repose; and that his happiness may be equal to his virtues."

Previous to General Washington's leaving New-York, on the 6th of December, the principal officers of the army then in the city, assembled at Frances' tavern, to take a final leave of their illustrious and much-loved commander. The passions of human nature were never more tenderly agitated than in this interesting scene. His Excellency having filled a glass of wine, thus addressed his brave fellow-soldiers:

"With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you: I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and honourable."

These words produced extreme sensibility on both sides: they were answered by warm expressions, and fer-

vent wishes, from the gentlemen of the army, whose truly pathetic feelings it is not in our power to convey to the reader. Soon after this scene was closed, the Governor, the council and citizens of the first distinction waited on the General, and in terms the most affectionate, took their leave--The corps of Light Infantry was drawn up in a line, and the Commander in Chief passed through them on his way to White-hall, where he embarked in his barge for Powles Hook, from whence he proceeded to Philadelphia, where he made a short stay. Here he delivered to the Comptroller of the public Treasury an account of the expenditure of all the public money which he had received during the war; by which it appeared, that the whole sum which had gone through his hands only amounted to fourteen thousand four hundred and seventy-nine pounds, eighteen shillings and nine-pence sterling, about sixty-four thousand three hundred and fifty dollars, nearly one hundred and fifty dollars per week.

From Philadelphia he proceeded to Annapolis, where the Congress was then sitting, and having obtained leave, he terminated his military career, and resigned his commission on the 23d of December: upon this occasion he delivered the following short and pathetic address, viz.

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS, ON
THE RESIGNATION OF HIS COMMISSION.

“ Mr. President,

“ The great events, on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I have now the honour of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

“ Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation--I resign, with satisfaction, the appointment I accepted with diffidence, a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superceded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of

the supreme power of the union, and the patronage of Heaven.

“ The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest.

“ While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge, in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the gentlemen who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible the choice of confidential officers to compose my family should be more fortunate; permit me, sir, to recommend in particular those who have continued in the service to the present moment, as worthy the favourable notice and patronage of Congress.

“ I consider it as an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping.

“ Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.

G. WASHINGTON.”

City of Annapolis, Dec. 23, 1783.

ANSWER OF CONGRESS.

“ Sir,

“ The United States in Congress assembled, receive, with emotions too affecting for utterance, the solemn resignation of the authorities under which you have led their troops with success, through a perilous and doubtful war.

“ Called upon by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge before it had formed alliances, and whilst it was without funds or a government to support you.

“ You have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes ; you have, by the love and confidence of your fellow-citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and transmit their fame to posterity ; you have persevered, till these United States, aided by a magnanimous king and nation, have been enabled, under a just Providence, to close the war in freedom, safety, and independence ; on which happy event, we sincerely join you in congratulations.

“ Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world—having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict, and to those who feel oppression—you retire from the great theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow-citizens ; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command : it will continue to animate remotest ages. We feel, with you, our obligations to the army in general, and will particularly charge ourselves with the interests of those confidential officers who have attended your person to this affecting moment.

“ We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of its citizens to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation ; and for you, we address to him our earnest prayers, that a life so beloved may be fostered with all his care ; that your days may be happy as they have been illustrious ; and that he will finally give you that reward which this world cannot give.”

With these becoming sentiments, general Washington retired from the toils of war to enjoy in private the rural pleasures of Mount Vernon, carrying with him the thanks and blessings of a grateful people, emulating the example of the virtuous Roman general,* who, vic-

* *Cincinnatus*.

torious, left the tented field, covered with honour, and withdrew from public life.

No person, who had not the advantage of being present when he received the intelligence of peace, and who did not accompany him to his domestic retirement, can describe the relief which that joyful event brought to his labouring mind, or the supreme satisfaction with which he withdrew to private life. From his triumphal entry into New-York, upon the evacuation of that city by the British army, to his arrival at Mount Vernon, after the resignation of his commission to Congress, festive crowds impeded his passage through all the populous towns: the devotion of a whole people pursued him, with prayers to Heaven for blessings on his head, while their gratitude sought the most expressive language of manifesting itself to him, as their common father and benefactor. When he became a private citizen, he had the unusual felicity to find that his native state was among the most zealous in doing justice to his merits; and that stronger demonstrations of affectionate esteem (if possible) were given by the citizens of his neighbourhood, than by any other description of men on the continent. As he always refused to accept of any pecuniary compensation for his public services, or provision for the augmented expenses which he must have incurred in consequence of his public employment, no salary was ever annexed by Congress to his important command, and he only drew weekly for the expenses of his public table and other necessary demands, although proposals have been made in the most delicate manner, particularly by the states of Virginia and Pennsylvania. His conduct in this particular is noble and magnanimous, and exhibits to the world an undeniable evidence of self-disinterestedness, of the purity of his motives, and integrity of his heart. His answer to the governor of Virginia, declining the acceptance of a present from that state, is so characteristic of his whole public conduct, that we are induced to give it in his own words, and we are convinced it will prove acceptable to his admirers.

Letter from his Excellency General Washington, to the Governor of Virginia, declining the acceptance of fifty shares in the companies for opening the navigation of James and Patomac rivers, which had been vested in him by act of the legislature of that commonwealth, as a small acknowledgment of his merits and services.

“ Your Excellency having been pleased to transmit to me a copy of the act appropriating to my benefit, certain shares in the companies for opening the navigation of James and Patomac rivers, I take the liberty of returning to the assembly, through your hands, the profound and grateful acknowledgments, inspired by so signal a mark of their beneficent intentions towards me. I beg you, sir, to assure them, that I am filled on this occasion with every sentiment which can flow from a heart, warm with love for my country—sensible to every token of its approbation and affection, and solicitous to testify, in every instance, a respectful submission to its wishes. With these sentiments in my bosom, I need not dwell on the anxiety I feel, in being obliged in this instance to decline a favour, which is rendered no less flattering by the manner in which it is conveyed, than it is affectionate in itself. In explaining this obligation, I pass over a comparison of my endeavours in the public service, with the many honourable testimonies of approbation which have already so far over-rated and over-paid them—reciting one consideration only, which supercedes the necessity of recurring to every other. When I was first called to the station with which I was honoured during the late conflict for our liberties; to the diffidence which I had so many reasons to feel in accepting it, I thought it my duty to join *a firm resolution to shut my hand against every pecuniary recompence*. To this resolution I have inviolably adhered; and from this resolution (if I had the inclination,) I do not consider myself at liberty to depart. Whilst I repeat, therefore, my fervent acknowledgments to the legislature for their very kind sentiments and intentions in my favour, and at the same time beg them to be persuaded that a remembrance of this singular proof of goodness towards me, will never cease to cherish returns of the warmest affection and

gratitude; I must pray that their act, so far as it has for its object my personal emolument, may not have its effect. But if it should please the general assembly to permit me to turn the destination of the fund vested in me, from my private emolument to objects of a public nature, it will be my study, in selecting these, to prove the sincerity of my gratitude, by preferring such as may appear most subservient to the enlightened and patriotic views of the legislature.

I am, &c.

GEORGE WASHINGTON."

Upon this request, the legislature of Virginia repealed so much of the act referred to as related to the vesting the above-mentioned shares in General Washington and heirs, and enacted that the shares and profits accruing therefrom, should stand appropriated to such objects of a public nature as his Excellency should direct and appoint. Some time afterwards, General Washington applied these shares of the canal company to the erection and establishment of two seminaries of learning in Virginia, which were accomplished under his immediate direction.

Although the enlarged mind of General Washington felt superior to such considerations, and nobly refused any recompence for himself, yet he eloquently, though unsuccessfully, pleaded the cause of his fellow-soldiers, and other public creditors. He considered himself as pledged to the army that their country would do them ample justice, in rewarding them for their glorious services, exercised in its defence, and finally crowned by the complete establishment of its liberty and independence. He could foresee the evils which were to follow if a regular and efficient revenue system was not pursued:—To effect these purposes, and to inculcate the necessity of union, justice, subordination, and of such principles and practices as the new situation of his country required, he published his parting advice to his countrymen, in the following eloquent circular letter, addressed to the governors of the individual states, viz.

A CIRCULAR LETTER

From his Excellency George Washington, Commander in Chief of the Armies of the United States of America, to the Governors of the several States.

Sir,

The great object for which I had the honour to hold an appointment in the service of my country, being accomplished, I am now preparing to resign it into the hands of Congress, and return to that domestic retirement, which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance; a retirement for which I have never ceased to sigh through a long and painful absence, in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose: but, before I carry this resolution into effect, I think it a duty incumbent upon me to make this my last official communication, to congratulate you on the glorious events which Heaven has been pleased to produce in our favour, to offer my sentiments respecting some important subjects, which appear to me to be intimately connected with the tranquillity of the United States, to take my leave of your Excellency as a public character, and to give my final blessing to that country in whose service I have spent the prime of my life; for whose sake I have consumed so many anxious days and watchful nights: and whose happiness, being extremely dear to me, will always constitute no inconsiderable part of my own.

Impressed with the liveliest sensibility on this pleasing occasion, I will claim the indulgence of dilating the more copiously on the subjects of our mutual felicitation. When we consider the magnitude of the prize we contended for, the doubtful nature of the contest, and the favourable manner in which it has terminated; we shall find the greatest possible reason for gratitude and rejoicing: this is a theme that will afford infinite delight to every benevolent and liberal mind, whether the event in contemplation be considered as a source of present enjoyment, or the parent of future happiness; and we shall have equal occasion to felicitate ourselves on the lot which Providence has assigned us, whether we view it in a natural, a political, or moral point of view.

The citizens of America, placed in the most enviable condition, as the sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and abounding with all the necessities and conveniences of life, are now, by the late satisfactory pacification, acknowledged to be possessed of absolute freedom and independency; they are from this period to be considered as the actors on a most conspicuous theatre, which seems to be peculiarly designed by Providence for the display of human greatness and felicity: here they are not only surrounded with every thing which can contribute to the completion of private and domestic enjoyment, but Heaven has crowned all its other blessings, by giving a fairer opportunity for political happiness than any other nation has ever been favoured with. Nothing can illustrate these observations more forcibly than the recollection of the happy conjuncture of times and circumstances, under which our Republic assumed its rank among the nations. The foundation of our empire was not laid in a gloomy age of ignorance and superstition, but at an epocha when the rights of mankind were better understood and more clearly defined, that at any former period: the researches of the human mind after social happiness have been carried to a great extent: the treasures of knowledge acquired by the labours of philosophers, sages and legislators, through a long succession of years, are laid open for use, and their collected wisdom may be happily applied in the establishment of our forms of government: the free cultivation of letters, the unbounded extension of commerce, the progressive refinement of manners, the growing liberality of sentiment, and above all, the pure and benign light of revelation, have had a meliorating influence on mankind, and increased the blessings of society. At this auspicious period the United States came into existence as a nation, and if her citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own.

Such is our situation, and such are our prospects; but notwithstanding the cup of blessing is thus reached out to us—notwithstanding happiness is ours, if we have a disposition to seize the occasion, and make it our own:

yet it appears to me, there is an option still left to the United States of America, whether they will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable as a nation. This is the time of their political probation; this is the moment, when the eyes of the world are turned upon them; this is the time to establish or ruin their national character forever; this is the favourable moment to give such a tone to the Federal Government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution; or this may be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the Confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one State against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes. For, according to the system of policy the States shall adopt at this moment, they will stand or fall; and, by their confirmation or lapse, it is yet to be decided, whether the revolution must ultimately be considered as a blessing or a curse—a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for with our fate will the destiny of unborn millions be involved.

With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak to your Excellency the language of freedom and of sincerity, without disguise. I am aware, however, those who differ from me in political sentiments, may perhaps remark I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty; and they may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is alone the result of the purest intentions; but the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives—the part I have hitherto acted in life—the determination I have formed of not taking any share in public business hereafter—the ardent desire I feel and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government,—will, I flatter myself, sooner or later, convince my countrymen, that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this Address.

There are four things which I humbly conceive are essential to the well-being, I may even venture to say to the existence of the United States, as an independent power.

1st. An indissoluble union of the states under one federal head.

2d. A sacred regard to public justice.

3d. The adoption of a proper peace establishment. And,

4th. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and politics, to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity, and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.

These are the pillars on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. Liberty is the basis, and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country.

On the three first articles I will make a few observations, leaving the last to the good sense and serious consideration of those immediately concerned.

Under the first head, although it may not be necessary or proper for me, in this place, to enter into a particular disquisition of the principles of the union, and to take up the great question which has been frequently agitated, whether it be expedient and requisite for the states to delegate a larger proportion of power to Congress, or not; yet it will be a part of my duty, and that of every true patriot, to assert, without reserve, and to insist upon the following positions. That unless the states will suffer Congress to exercise those prerogatives they are undoubtedly invested with by the constitution, every thing must very rapidly tend to anarchy and confusion.—That it is indispensable to the happiness of the individual states, that there should be lodged, somewhere a supreme power, to regulate and govern the general concerns of the confederated republic, without which the union cannot be of long duration.—That there must be a faithful and pointed compliance on the part of every state, with the late proposals and demands of Congress, or the most fatal consequences will ensue.—That whatever measures

have a tendency to dissolve the union, or contribute to violate or lessen the sovereign authority, ought to be considered as hostile to the liberty and independence of America, and the authors of them treated accordingly. —And lastly, that unless we can be enabled by the concurrence of the States to participate of the fruits of the revolution, and enjoy the essential benefits of civil society, under a form of government so free and uncorrupted, so happily guarded against the danger of oppression, as has been devised and adopted by the articles of confederation, it will be a subject of regret, that so much blood and treasure have been lavished for no purpose ; that so many sufferings have been encountered without a compensation, and that so many sacrifices have been made in vain. Many other considerations might here be adduced to prove, that without an entire conformity to the spirit of the Union, we cannot exist as an independent power. It will be sufficient for my purpose to mention one or two, which seem to me of the greatest importance. It is only in our united character, that we are known as an empire, that our independence is acknowledged, that our power can be regarded, or our credit supported among foreign nations. The treaties of the European powers with the United States of America, will have no validity on a dissolution of the Union. We shall be left nearly in a state of nature ; or we may find, by our own unhappy experience, that there is a natural and necessary progression from the extreme of anarchy to the extreme of tyranny ; and that arbitrary power is most easily established on the ruins of liberty abused to licentiousness.

As to the second article, which respects the performance of public justice, Congress have, in their late Address to the United States, almost exhausted the subject ; they have explained their ideas so fully, and have enforced the obligations the states are under to render complete justice to all the public creditors, with so much dignity and energy, that, in my opinion, no real friend to the honour and independency of America can hesitate a single moment respecting the propriety of complying with the just and honourable measures proposed. If their arguments do not produce conviction, I know of nothing that will have greater influence, especially when we re-

collect that the system referred to, being the result of the collected wisdom of the continent, must be esteemed, if not perfect, certainly the least objectionable of any that could be devised ; and that, if it should not be carried into immediate execution, a national bankruptcy, with all its deplorable consequences, will take place, before any different plan can possibly be proposed or adopted. So pressing are the present circumstances, and such is the alternative now offered to the states.

The ability of the country to discharge the debts which have been incurred in its defence, is not to be doubted. An inclination, I flatter myself, will not be wanting ; the path of our duty is plain before us ; honesty will be found, on every experiment, to be the best and only true policy. Let us then, as a nation, be just ; let us fulfil the public contracts which Congress had undoubtedly a right to make for the purpose of carrying on the war, with the same good faith we suppose ourselves bound to perform our private engagements. In the mean time, let an attention to the cheerful performance of their proper business, as individuals, and as members of society, be earnestly inculcated on the citizens of America ; then will they strengthen the hands of government, and be happy under its protection. Every one will reap the fruit of his labours ; every one will enjoy his own acquisitions, without molestation and without danger.

In this state of absolute freedom and perfect security, who will grudge to yield a very little of his property to support the common interests of society and ensure the protection of government ? Who does not remember the frequent declarations at the commencement of the war, that we should be completely satisfied, if, at the expense of one half, we could defend the remainder of our possessions ? Where is the man to be found, who wishes to remain indebted for the defence of his own person and property, to the exertions, the bravery, and the blood of others, without making one generous effort to pay the debt of honour and of gratitude ? In what part of the continent shall we find any man, or body of men, who would not blush to stand up, and propose measures purposely calculated to rob the soldier of his stipend, and the public creditor of his due ? And were it possi-

ble that such a flagrant instance of injustice could ever happen, would it not excite the general indignation, and tend to bring down upon the authors of such measures the aggravated vengeance of Heaven? If, after all, a spirit of disunion, or a temper of obstinacy and perverseness should manifest itself in any of the states; if such an ungracious disposition should attempt to frustrate all the happy effects that might be expected to flow from the union; if there should be a refusal to comply with the requisitions for funds to discharge the annual interest of the public debts, and if that refusal should revive all those jealousies, and produce all those evils which are now happily removed—Congress, who have, in all their transactions, shown a great degree of magnanimity and justice, will stand justified in the sight of God and man; And that state alone, which puts itself in opposition to the aggregate wisdom of the continent, and follows such mistaken and pernicious counsels, will be responsible for all the consequences.

For my own part, conscious of having acted, while a servant of the public, in the manner I conceived best suited to promote the real interests of my country; having, in consequence of my fixed belief, in some measure pledged myself to the army, that their country would finally do them complete and ample justice, and not wishing to conceal any instance of my official conduct from the eyes of the world, I have thought proper to transmit to your Excellency the enclosed collection of papers, relative to the half-pay and commutation granted by Congress to the officers of the army: from these communications my decided sentiments will be clearly comprehended, together with the conclusive reasons, which induced me, at an early period, to recommend the adoption of this measure in the most earnest and serious manner. As the proceedings of Congress, the army, and myself, are open to all, and contain, in my opinion, sufficient information to remove the prejudice and errors which may have been entertained by any, I think it unnecessary to say any thing more, than just to observe, that the resolutions of Congress, now alluded to, are undoubtedly as absolutely binding upon the United States, as the most solemn acts of confederation or legislation.

As to the idea, which, I am informed, has in some instances prevailed, that the half-pay and commutation are to be regarded merely in the odious light of a pension, it ought to be exploded for ever: that provision should be viewed, as it really was, a reasonable compensation offered by Congress, at a time when they had nothing else to give to the officers of the army, for services then to be performed: it was the only means to prevent a total derilection of the service; it was a part of their hire. I may be allowed to say, it was the price of their blood, and of your independence; it is therefore more than a common debt, it is a debt of honour; it can never be considered as a pension or gratuity, nor be cancelled until it is fairly discharged.

With regard to the distinction between officers and soldiers, it is sufficient that the uniform experience of every nation of the world, combined with our own, proves the utility and propriety of the discrimination. Rewards, in proportion to the aid the public derives from them, are unquestionably due to all its servants. In some lines the soldiers have, perhaps, generally, had as ample compensation for their services, by the large bounties which have been paid them, as their officers will receive in the proposed commutation; in others, if besides the donation of land, the payment of arrearages of clothing and wages (in which articles all the component parts of the army must be put upon the same footing) we take into the estimate, the bounties many of the soldiers have received, and the gratuity of one year's full pay, which is promised to all, possibly their situation (every circumstance being duly considered) will not be deemed less eligible than that of the officers.

Should a farther reward, however, be judged equitable, I will venture to assert, no man will enjoy greater satisfaction than myself, on seeing an exemption from taxes for a limited time (which has been petitioned for in some instances) or any other adequate immunity or compensation granted to the brave defenders of their country's cause: but neither the adoption or rejection of this proposition will in any manner affect, much less militate against the act of Congress, by which they have offered five years full pay, in lieu of the half-pay for life,

which had been before promised to the officers of the army.

Before I conclude the subject of public justice, I cannot omit to mention the obligations this country is under to that meritorious class of veteran non-commissioned officers and privates, who have been discharged for inability, in consequence of the resolution of Congress, of the 23d of April, 1782, on an annual pension for life. Their peculiar sufferings, their singular merits and claims to that provision need only be known, to interest all the feelings of humanity in their behalf. Nothing but a punctual payment of their annual allowance can rescue them from the most complicated misery; and nothing could be a more melancholy and distressing sight, than to behold those who have shed their blood, or lost their limbs in the service of their country, without a shelter, without a friend, and without the means of obtaining any of the comforts or necessities of life, compelled to beg their daily bread from door to door. Suffer me to recommend those of this description belonging to your state, to the warmest patronage of your Excellency and your legislature.

It is necessary to say but a few words on the third topic which was proposed, and which regards particularly the defence of the republic. As there can be little doubt but Congress will recommend a proper peace establishment for the United States, in which a due attention will be paid to the importance of placing the militia of the union upon a regular and respectable footing; if this should be the case, I would beg leave to urge the great advantage of it in the strongest terms.

The militia of this country must be considered as the palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility: it is essential, therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole; that the formation and discipline of the militia of the continent should be absolutely uniform; and that the same species of arms, accoutrements, and military apparatus, should be introduced in every part of the United States. No one, who has not learned it from experience, can conceive the difficulty, expense, and confusion which result from a

contrary system, or the vague arrangements which have hitherto prevailed.

If, in treating of political points, a greater latitude than usual has been taken in the course of this Address, the importance of the crisis, and the magnitude of the objects in discussion, must be my apology: It is however, neither my wish nor expectation, that the preceding observations should claim any regard, except so far as they should appear to be dictated by a good intention; consonant to the immediate rules of justice; calculated to produce a liberal system of policy, and founded on whatever experience may have been acquired by a long and close attention to public business. Here I might speak with more confidence, from my actual observations; and if it would not swell this letter (already too prolix) beyond the bounds I had prescribed myself, I could demonstrate to every mind, open to conviction, that in less time, and with much less expense than has been incurred, the war might have been brought to the same happy conclusion, if the resources of the continent could have been properly drawn forth; that the distresses and disappointments which have very often occurred, have, in too many instances, resulted more from a want of energy in the continental government, than a deficiency of means in the particular States: That the inefficacy of the measures, arising from the want of an adequate authority in the supreme power, from a partial compliance with the requisitions of Congress in some of the States, and from a failure of punctuality in others, while it tended to damp the zeal of those who were more willing to exert themselves, served also to accumulate the expenses of the war, and to frustrate the best concerted plans; and that the discouragement occasioned by the complicated difficulties and embarrassments, in which our affairs were by this means involved, would have long ago produced the dissolution of any army, less patient, less virtuous, and less persevering than that which I have had the honour to command. But while I mention those things, which are notorious facts, as the defects of our Federal Constitution, particularly in the prosecution of a war, I beg it may be understood, that as I have ever taken a pleasure in gratefully acknowledging the assistance and

support I have derived from every class of citizens ; so shall I always be happy to do justice to the unparalleled exertions of the individual States, on many interesting occasions.

I have thus freely disclosed what I wished to make known before I surrendered up my public trust to those who committed it to me : The task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the Chief Magistrate of your State ; at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office, and all the employments of public life.

It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your legislature, at their next meeting ; and that they may be considered as the legacy of one who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the Divine benediction upon it.

I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection ; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government ; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large ; and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field ; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine author of our blessed religion ; without an humble imitation of whose example, in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation.

I have the honour to be, with much esteem and respect, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient, and most humble servant,

G. WASHINGTON.

General Washington having retired from all public employment, now assumed the character of a private gentleman ; he employed himself in improving his farms and plantation, and in cultivating the arts of peace. But

in this retreat of happiness and rural simplicity he was not long suffered to remain; it was too soon for the *father of America* to leave his infant care, his well-tryed virtues were generally and justly known to his fellow-citizens, and their confidence in his judgment, experience and disinterested patriotism, was universal even to enthusiasm. Four years had not expired from the period at which he resigned his military command, when the voice of his country again called him to its service.

In these peaceful scenes, Washington enjoyed the rational delights of rural life from the year 1783, till the summer of 1787, when he was chosen President of the Convention, which met at Philadelphia, and framed the present Constitution of the United States. The Federal Union after eleven years experience, had been found inadequate to the purposes of government. The fundamental distinction between the Articles of Confederation, and the new Constitution, lies in this; the former acted only on States, the latter on individuals;—the former could neither raise men or money by its own authority, but lay at the discretion of 13 different Legislatures, and, without their unanimous concurrence, was unable to provide for the public safety, or for the payment of the national debt. By the new Constitution, one Legislative, Executive, and Judicial power pervades the whole Union.” After a full consideration, and thorough discussion of its principles, it was ratified by 11 of the 13 States, and North-Carolina and Rhode-Island have since given their concurrence.

The new Constitution being thus adopted, Washington was chosen President in April, 1789, by the unanimous vote of his countrymen. When he received intelligence of his election, he set out from Mount Vernon for New-York. He was escorted by the militia and gentlemen of the first character from State to State, and numerous addresses of Congratulation were presented to him by the inhabitants of the towns through which he passed. On his approach to Philadelphia, he was met by above 20,000 citizens, who conducted him to the city, where an elegant entertainment was prepared for him.

His progress from Philadelphia to New-York is thus described by an elegant writer, and presents an animated picture of public gratitude. “When Mr. Washington

crossed the Delaware and landed on the Jersey shore, he was saluted with 3 cheers by the inhabitants of the vicinity. When he came to the brow of the hill on his way to Trenton, a triumphal arch was erected on the bridge, by the direction of the ladies of the place. The crown of the arch was highly ornamented with imperial laurels and flowers, and on it was displayed, in large figures, "December 26th, 1776." On the sweep of the arch, was this inscription, "The Defender of the Mothers will be the Protector of the Daughters." On the north side were ranged a number of young girls dressed in white, with garlands of flowers on their heads, and baskets of flowers on their arms—in the second row stood the young ladies, and behind them the married ladies of the town. The instant he passed the arch, the young girls began to sing the following ode :

" Welcome, mighty Chief, once more,

" Welcome to this grateful shore :—

" Now no mercenary foe

" Aims, again, the fatal blow—

" Aims at thee the fatal blow.

" Virgins fair, and matrons grave,

" These thy conq'ring arms did save

" Build for thee triumphant bowers ;

" Strew ye fair, his way with flowers,

" Strew your Hero's way with flowers."

" As they sung the last lines, they strewed their flowers on the road before their beloved Deliverer.—His situation on this occasion, contrasted with what he had, in December 1776, felt on the same spot, when the affairs of America were at the lowest ebb of depression, filled him with sensations that cannot be described. He was rowed across the bay from Elizabeth-Town to New-York, in an elegant barge, by 13 pilots. All the vessels in the harbour hoisted their flags. On his landing, universal joy diffused itself through every order of the people, and he was received and congratulated by the Governor of the State and officers of the Corporation. In the evening, the houses of the inhabitants were brilliantly illuminated.

On the 30th of April he was inaugurated President of the United States, and took the oath enjoined by the Constitution, in the following words, "I do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." An universal and solemn silence prevailed among the spectators during this part of the ceremony. The Chancellor then proclaimed him President of the United States, and was answered by the discharge of cannon, and the acclamations of 20,000 citizens. After which he delivered the following inaugural address to both houses of Congress, viz.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS.

Gentlemen,

"Among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties, than that, of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the fourteenth day of the present month: on the one hand, I was summoned by my country whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years: a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary, as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health, to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust, to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens, a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence, one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver, is that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance, by which it might be effected. All

I dare hope, is that if, in accepting this task, I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof of the confidence of my fellow-citizens--and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me--my error will be palliated by the motives which mislead me, and its consequences be judged by my country, with some share of the partiality in which they originated.

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station—it will be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations—and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States, a government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes: and may enable every instrument, employed in its administration, to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own, nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either. No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand, which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their united government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude, along with an humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seem to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join me,

I trust, in thinking, that there are none under the influence of which the proceedings of a new and free government can more auspiciously commence.

“ By the article establishing the executive department, it is made the duty of the president “ to recommend to your consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.” The circumstances under which I now meet you, will acquit me from entering into that subject, farther than to refer to the great constitutional charter under which you are now assembled ; and which, in defining your powers, designates the objects to which your attention is to be given. It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism, which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honourable qualifications, I behold the surest pledges, that as, on one side, no local prejudices or attachments—no separate views—nor party animosities, will mis-direct the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests : so, on another, that the foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality ; and the pre-eminence of free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens, and command the respect of the world. I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my country can inspire ; since there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage, between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity : since we ought to be no less persuaded, that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself hath ordained : and since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as fi-

nally, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people.

“ Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide how far an exercise of the occasional power delegated by the fifth article of the constitution is rendered expedient at the present juncture, by the nature of objections which have been urged against the system, or by the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations on this subject, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official opportunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the public good : for I assure myself, that whilst you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of an united and effective government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience ; a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the public harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question, how far the former can be more impregvably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

“ To the preceding observations, I have one to add, which will be most properly addressed to the House of Representatives. It concerns myself, and therefore will be as brief as possible. When I was first honoured with a call into the service of my country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty, required that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution I have in no instance departed. And being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline, as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments, which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the executive department ; and must accordingly pray that the pecuniary estimates for the station in which I am placed, may, during my continuance in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.

“ Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave ; but not with-

out resorting once more to the benign Parent of the human race, in humble supplication, that since he has been pleased to favour the American people, with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquillity, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on a form of government, for the security of their union, and the advancement of their happiness; so his divine blessing may be equally conspicuous in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures, on which the success of this government must depend.

G. WASHINGTON."

The first session of Congress, under the new constitution, continued their sittings from the 4th of March until the 29th of September: their attention was chiefly directed towards the establishment of various regulations for the restoration of the public credit of the United States, and other objects of political economy. During the period of the session, the President resided at New-York, sanctioning the proceedings of the legislature, and otherwise organizing the federal government. Shortly after the rising of Congress, he made a tour to the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New-Hampshire, attended by Mr. Lear and Major Jackson, his secretaries. In every part of the country through which he passed, the citizens embraced the opportunity of personally testifying their esteem and respect of the *man of their choice*, in whose character, whatever is great and good—whatever dignifies and adorns human nature, are so happily united. All that a grateful people could pay, was paid; whenever he approached a town or village, the roads were lined with citizens to hail him welcome—the military escorted him from place to place. Particularly to relate all the grateful testimonials which were paid him during this visit, is impossible, from their number. If our limits would permit, a description of the manner in which he was received at Boston would be particularly interesting; nor can we specify the numerous congratulatory addresses which were presented him. But no particular circumstance gave him more pleasure,

during his whole tour, than the plain and hearty manner in which Mr. Northey, the chairman of the selectmen at Salem, received him. This gentleman is of the society of Friends, and when the President was presented to the selectmen, Mr. Northey, being covered, took him by the hand, and said, "Friend Washington, we are glad to see thee, and in behalf of the inhabitants, bid thee a hearty welcome to Salem."

On his arrival at Newburyport, the following incident occurred: a poor old soldier named Cotton, who was with him in the memorable battle on the Ohio, when Braddock was defeated, requested and was admitted into the room where the President was,—on the soldier's asking "*how Major Washington did?*" the President immediately recollected his person, and rising from his chair, took him by the hand, and tenderly enquired into the scenes of his life, and present circumstances. "I thank God," answered the soldier, "that I have an opportunity of seeing my old commander once more, I have seen him in adversity, and now seeing him in glory, I can go home and die contented." The next morning, he came again to take leave of the President, who gave him a guinea, which he accepted he said, "merely as a token in remembrance of his commander," and which he wore pendant on his bosom, declaring that nothing earthly should separate it from him.

While General Washington was President of the United States, the following circumstance, which does honour to his humanity, occurred. One Reuben Rouzy, of Virginia, owed him about a thousand pounds; one of the President's agents brought a suit for the money, judgment was obtained, and execution issued against the body of the defendant, who was taken to gaol. He had a considerable landed property, but this kind of property cannot be sold in Virginia for debts, unless at the discretion of the person. He had a large family, and preferred lying in gaol to selling his land, for the sake of his children.—Some of his acquaintance hinted to him, that probably General Washington did not know any thing of the proceeding, and it might be well to send him a petition, with a statement of the circumstances. He did so, and the very next post from Philadelphia,

after his petition arrived, brought him a releasement, with a severe *reprimand* on the agent for acting in such a cruel manner, without consent. Poor Rouzy was, in consequence, restored to his family and happiness, who never laid down their heads at night, without offering their prayers to Heaven for our *much beloved* WASHINGTON.

On the 4th day of January, 1790, Congress held their second session at New-York. The President opened it with a speech; he congratulated them on the favourable prospects which the public affairs then assumed; the accession of the state of North-Carolina to the Union, the rising credit and respectability of the country, and the concord, peace and plenty with which they were blessed; he directed their attention towards the making provision for the common defence, assuring them that "to be prepared for war, is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace, and that a free people ought not only to be armed but disciplined;" he recommended the protection of the Western and Southern frontiers against the depredations of the hostile Indians; the establishment of intercourse with other nations; the framing of an uniform law for the naturalization of foreigners; the importance of uniformity in the currency, weights and measures throughout the Union; the advancement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures; the encouragement of exertions of skill, and genius, and to facilitate the intercourse between the distant parts of the country, by a due attention to the post office and post-roads. He particularly recommended the promotion of science and literature, as the surest basis of public happiness, and best means of securing a free constitution, by teaching the people to know and to value their rights, to discern and provide against innovations of them, to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority, to discriminate the spirit of liberty from that of licentiousness, cherishing the first, avoiding the last, and uniting a speedy but temperate vigilance against encroachments, with an inviolable respect to the laws. He informed them that he had directed the papers and estimates to be laid before them, which were necessary to convey to them that informa-

tion of the state of the Union, which it was his duty to afford. He concluded by assuring them, that "He should derive great satisfaction, from a co-operation with them, in the pleasing, though arduous task, of ensuring to their fellow-citizens the blessings which they have a right to expect from a free, efficient, and equal government."

Their session continued their sittings until the 12th of August following; in that month the President negotiated a treaty of peace and friendship between the United States and the Creek nation of Indians; the ceremony took place at New-York, on the 30th of September. The same year General Harmer, with 320 United States troops and 1133 militia, gave battle to the Miami Indians, by whom he was defeated with the loss of 183 men killed, and 31 wounded; about 100 or upwards of the Indians were killed. The Miami village, containing about 100 log houses, or wigwams, with 20,000 bushels of corn, was destroyed.

The third session of Congress met on the 6th of December, 1790, and rose on the 3d of March following; their deliberations were chiefly directed towards the regulation of commerce, further improvement of the judicial system, and making provision for the appointment of consuls in foreign countries. The state of Kentucky was admitted into the union as a distinct state, and a loan was negotiated with the States of Holland.

The Indian war continued on the frontier of the states. During the summer of 1791, General Scott surprised the Wabash towns; he killed about 30 Indians, took 50 prisoners, and brought with him 200 horses, loaded with peltry and other articles of plunder, with the loss of three men only. The attention of the President during the period of this Congress, was chiefly directed towards the adoption of measures for the protection of the frontiers, and establishment of commerce.

On the 24th of October, 1791, the second Congress commenced their first session; the President, as usual, opened the session by a speech to both houses; he began by remarking the abundance of the preceding harvest, the progressive state of agriculture, manufactures, commerce and navigation, and the general and happy effects which had been produced by the revival of public and

private confidence, to which the laws of the United States had so eminently contributed. He mentioned the plan laid down for conciliating the friendship of the Indians; the basis of which was a strict adherence to the dictates of justice and humanity. The act for laying a duty on distilled spirits, had been, he said, attended with some difficulty, from the want of experience in the federal government, to make the proper arrangements, and, in some parts of the union, there had been a misconception of its provisions; but he entertained no doubt that the discontent produced from it would be removed by a proper explanation of the law. The President next observed, that, agreeable to several acts on that subject, a district of ten miles square, for the permanent seat of the government of the United States, had been fixed upon, and announced by proclamation; that the district comprehended lands on both sides of the Potowmac, and the towns of Alexandria and George-town; that a city had accordingly been laid out, and that there was every reason to expect a due progress in the buildings. He also informed the two houses that a census of the inhabitants of the United States, had been almost completed, and afforded the pleasing assurance that the present population bordered upon four millions of persons; that a further loan of two millions and an half of florins had been completed in Holland, upon terms similar to the last, and that another loan for six millions of florins had been set on foot. He concluded by recommending to their particular attention, the supporting of the militia on an effective plan; the administration of the post-office, the extension and improvement of the post-roads, the necessity for a public mint, an uniformity of weights and measures, and a provision for the sale of the vacant lands of the United States.

This session continued their deliberations, until the 8th of May, 1792, when they adjourned till the first Monday of November following. During their session and adjournment, there was no remarkable or important event: a series of massacres, were, as formerly, committed on the frontiers; the hopes expressed by the President, of being able to accommodate the disputes with the Indians, did not prove successful. On the 4th of November, 1791, the United States army, under the

command of General St. Clair, was attacked by surprise, within fifteen miles of the Miami village; the contest lasted four hours, when the Indians became victorious, the retreat of the Americans was accomplished with the loss of 46 officers, and 600 privates, killed; 21 commissioned officers, and 242 non-commissioned officers and privates, wounded, and eight pieces of artillery and their whole baggage taken. In this battle it is said, that 1200 Canadians fought under the disguise of Indians. The attention of the Executive, during this period, was also engaged in devising modes to reconcile the citizens, in some districts of the union, to the law, enacted for the purpose of collecting a certain duty on spirits, distilled within the United States, in some of the states, particularly the western parts of Pennsylvania, where a regular and formidable opposition began to manifest itself, in consequence of which, the special interposition of the President was deemed advisable. He issued a proclamation, recommending a compliance with the laws, and warning the citizens against unlawful proceedings and combinations, having a tendency to obstruct the same.

The second Congress met again in November, 1792. The President opened the session with a speech, the greatest part of which respected the unfortunate endeavours to terminate the Indian hostilities. He informed Congress of the opposition which had been manifested to the excise law, and recommended a revision of the judiciary system. He further observed, that three loans had been negotiated for the use of the United States, one at Antwerp, and two at Amsterdam, each for three millions of florins, on very reasonable terms, which afforded a pleasing evidence of the increasing credit of the new government. On the 2d of March, 1793, this session adjourned.

Heretofore the prosperity of the United States met with little or no interruption, except from the hostility of the Indians. The attention of the Executive was chiefly directed to the establishment of those measures which the organization of the infant republic rendered necessary. The extension of commerce, and the disputes of the European powers, rendered it necessary for the United States to send and receive ministers and agents, for the better regulation of affairs.

This necessary measure created troubles and perplexities hitherto unknown to the Executive of the United States. On the 8th of April, 1793, citizen Genet arrived at Charleston, as minister plenipotentiary from the executive of France to the President of the United States. On the 22d of the same month, the President issued a proclamation, enjoining the citizens of the United States to a strict neutrality, in the contest between the maritime powers, and threatening prosecution to all who should infringe the same. The public approbation of this wise measure, for the preservation of the public tranquillity, was manifested in numerous addresses to the President, thanking him in warm terms for his attention to the interest of the citizens; many, however, were offended at the measure, as they conceived that it implied a deficiency of respect and gratitude to the republic of France, to whom the United States were highly indebted for their independence. Genet arrived in Philadelphia, the seat of government, on the 17th of May. The conduct of this minister is, perhaps, unexampled in diplomatic history. It was not until the publication of the proclamation of the President, enjoining neutrality, that the government first heard of his arrival, and even then, they were only informed through the medium of the newspapers, about a fortnight after his arrival; instead of presenting his credentials to the President, he began to assume a conduct imprudent and unbecoming; he undertook to authorize the fitting out of armed vessels; he enlisted citizens and others, and gave commissions to cruise and commit hostilities against the vessels of England and other nations at war with France, but who were, at the same time, at peace with the United States. These vessels had actually taken prizes, brought them into American ports, where the consuls of France held courts of admiralty, tried, condemned, and authorized their sale as legal prizes. These proceedings, in opposition to the peace of the United States, were instantly complained of by Mr. Hammond, the British minister; thus were the seeds of future controversy planted. The government of the United States interfered, and, in some cases, overruled the proceedings of both the British and French, as illegal; remonstrances were exhibited to the President,

from both sides, which created a series of diplomatic correspondence. A new source of discontent, on the part of the French, now arose; Genet demanded, with some abruptness, money from the treasury of the United States, in part payment of their debt to France, with which the American government found it inconvenient to comply. This state of diplomatic hostility could not be expected to hold out long without coming to a crisis. Accordingly, on the 16th of August, the President ordered Mr. Jefferson, the secretary of state, to address a letter to Mr. Morris, the American ambassador in France, soliciting the republic to recal their minister. In the mean time Citizen Duplaine, vice-consul for the republic of France, in the port of Boston, having committed sundry encroachments on the laws of the United States, the President, in consequence thereof, suspended his powers.

The term for which General Washington was elected President having expired, he was again re-elected to the same office. On the 2d of December, 1793, the third Congress commenced their first session. The President, in his speech to both houses, expressed a respectful sense of the confidence that he enjoyed, in being again called, by the suffrage of his fellow-citizens, to the office of chief magistrate. He recited the measures which he had adopted to avoid a rupture with any of the powers at war, and to ensure to the citizens of the United States the rights of neutrality. He further recommended to Congress, the necessity of placing the country in a state of defence; that while the United States fulfilled their duties to the rest of the world, they may likewise exact the fulfilment of the like duties towards them. He informed them of the means which had been pursued for conciliating the dispositions of the Indians, and recommended to Congress to make provision for the establishment of commerce with the Indian nations, as the best means of securing their interest, and rendering their tranquillity permanent; he concluded by recommending a repeal of the tax on the transportation of public prints, as they contained the best means of informing the minds, and securing the affections of their constituents;—he afterwards, by a special message, in-

formed the House of Representatives, "that although the government of the French nation had generally manifested a friendly disposition to the United States, yet the person unfortunately appointed their minister plenipotentiary, had breathed nothing of the friendly disposition of the nation which sent him; his proceedings had uniformly tended to involve us in war abroad, and discord and anarchy at home." He hoped that the French government would not long suffer the United States to remain exposed to the action of a person, who had so little respected the mutual dispositions of the two countries.

Soon after this period, this minister was recalled, his conduct having been unequivocally disapproved of. About this period the commerce of the United States began to suffer greatly, from the depredations of the British, under pretence of their being loaded with French property; it also suffered from the piracy of privateers, who, for the most part, disclaiming justice altogether, seized both vessels and cargo, and disposed of the same for their own use; a considerable number of American vessels were likewise captured in the Western Ocean by the Algerine corsairs. These subjects were assumed by Congress, and many modes were proposed for the purpose of putting a stop to the unwarrantable excesses. A bill was passed, to provide a naval armament against the Algerines. On the 25th of March, a motion was made in the House of Representatives, assented to by the Senate, and signed by the President, laying an embargo for 30 days on all vessels bound to foreign ports; this embargo was afterwards continued until the 25th of May. The President was empowered to raise an additional corps of artillery-men, for the purpose of garrisoning the fortifications for the defence of the sea-coasts; he was also authorized to call on the executives of the different states, to take effectual measures for organizing 80,000 effective militia.

On the 19th of May, intelligence was received from the territory N. W. of the river Ohio, stating the hardships which the citizens of that territory sustained from the hostile disposition of the Cherokee Indians; the massacre of 200 people, and the loss of 2000 horses,

formed a part of the list of their disasters. On the 20th of May, the president by a message, informed the House of Representatives, that there had been some danger of hostilities against the territories of Spain, in the neighbourhood of the United States; that the governor of Kentucky had indicated that he would make no exertions to prevent the expulsion of the Spaniards from the banks of the Mississippi, as he had found them a perfidious and worthless people, constantly exciting the Indians to murder the settlers in that quarter.

During this session of Congress, many important laws were enacted. The act assigning to the marquis de la Fayette, the sum of 24,424 dollars, for his services during the war, being the pay of a major-general: and the act forbidding American citizens, or foreigners, residing in the United States, under severe penalties, from being concerned in the slave trade, does great honour to the legislature. On the 9th of June, 1794, this session adjourned.

In 1794, during the recess of Congress, the attention of the President of the United States was called to suppress an insurrection, which began to assume a very formidable aspect. It was confined to the western parts of the state of Pennsylvania. The outlines of it are follow, viz. During the year 1790, the Congress of the United States found it necessary "to lay and collect excises." This mode of taxation, discordant to the genius of the citizens, in many parts of the union, met with considerable opposition, which, however, was gradually banished by reason and patriotism, excepting the four western counties of Pennsylvania, where a prejudice still remained, and produced symptoms of riot and violence. The disaffection was at first vented in general complaints; certain associations were formed to prevent the operation of the laws, and the excise officers received some marks of contempt and rudeness. These associations held public meetings, and published their resolutions. Besides the excise law, they censured several other acts of the federal government; as the exorbitant salaries of office, the institution of a national bank, the interest of the public debt, &c.

On the 6th of September, 1791, the collector of the

revenue for that district was seized by a party, armed, and in disguise; they tarred and feathered him, cut off his hair, and committed other acts of violence; legal process was therefore issued against the offenders, but the insurgents prevented the marshal from serving them; they fired upon him, arrested, and, for some time, detained him as a prisoner; a number of similar outrages were committed. The President, the ever watchful guardian of the constitution, beheld, with sorrow, these excesses; he sought and weighed what was best to be done in this momentous crisis; he beheld the judiciary stripped of its capacity to enforce the laws, and crimes, which reached to the very existence of social order, perpetrated without control; the friends of government insulted, and that constitution violated, which he had made a sacred vow to protect; he beheld with abhorrence the idea of "arraying citizen against citizen," until every lenient measure should be exhausted. He issued proclamations, exhorting the rioters to desist from such disorderly proceedings; he recommended obedience to the laws; he appointed commissioners to repair to the scene of insurrection, authorized them to confer with the insurgents, to state to them his sensations, to assure them that it was his earnest wish to avoid a resort to coercion; he even offered them pardon, on condition of receiving satisfactory assurance of obedience to the laws.

These lenient measures did not produce the good effects that should have been expected. The President therefore deemed it prudent to resort to military force.—Fifteen thousand militia were put in motion, their number intimidated the insurgents: thus the insurrection was quelled without the effusion of blood; some of the ringleaders were apprehended and brought to trial; one of them was found guilty of high treason and condemned to suffer, but was pardoned by the President.—Indeed, the same goodness of disposition actuated the President, from the beginning to the termination of this licentious invasion of the laws, notwithstanding there are in the United States, certain discontented, invidious individuals, who wish to stigmatize every act of the Executive with opprobrium.

In November, 1794, the third Congress held their

second session, at Philadelphia. The President began his speech with a history of the opposition which had been manifested to the constitution and laws of the United States, and of the means which he had pursued to suppress it; the alacrity which the militia, and others who volunteered their service displayed, exhibited, he said, "to the highest advantage, the value of republican government; to behold the most and least wealthy of our citizens, standing in the same ranks as private soldiers, pre-eminently distinguished by being the army of the constitution; undeterred by a march of three hundred miles, over rugged mountains, by the approach of an inclement season, or by any other discouragement." He recommended to Congress to re-imburse the officers of government and other citizens, who had sustained losses, for their generous exertions in upholding the constitution and laws; "the amount," he said, "would not be great; and on future emergencies, the government would be amply repaid by the influence of an example, that he who incurs a loss in its defence, shall find a recompense in its liberality. The intelligence from the army of General Wayne, acting against the hostile Indians N. W. of the Ohio, he said, afforded a happy presage to the military operations, that they had damped the ardour and obstinacy of the savages.--Yet although the power of the United States to punish them, could not be questioned, that he was not unwilling to cement a lasting peace, upon terms of equity and good neighbourhood; he recommended the adoption of a definitive plan for the redemption of the public debt, and in subsequent communications he transmitted to them, certain papers relative to the intercourse of the United States with foreign nations; (they announced to Congress and to the world, his unremitting exertions to cultivate peace with all the world,) to observe treaties with good faith, to check deviations from the line of impartiality, and to explain and correct what was misapprehended or appeared injurious.

Ever since the formal ratification of the treaties of peace between the United States and Great-Britain, numerous causes of complaint has existed on the part of both countries respecting its fulfilment. The history of

the nature, progress, and final termination of these disputes, will form a very interesting part in the history of the political and diplomatic character of *President Washington*; but the bounds which we have assigned to the present sketch, prevents us from entering fully upon the subject: The ground of complaint on both sides, was disputed in 1792, in a correspondence between Mr. Jefferson, secretary of state, and Mr. Hammond, the envoy of Britain; in their letters, the reciprocal complaints are stated with candour, perspicuity and completeness; to support their respective arguments, they bring forward on each side, a large body of illustrations and authorities, which are highly interesting. This correspondence was published by Congress in 1794. The arguments of Mr. Jefferson appeared to have contained unanswerable weight, as no reply or explanation were ever made to them, although requested by him.—Affairs remained in this state of suspense until June 1793, when the British, in consequence of their hostilities with France, issued orders to the commanders of their vessels, to stop all neutral vessels carrying provisions to any port in that republic; ships attempting to enter any French port, blockaded by the English, were to be condemned, both vessel and cargo, whatever it may consist of: the order contained a limited exception in favour of Denmark and Sweden, but in the execution of it, the rights of America were entirely disregarded. This matter produced a diplomatic discussion between the ministers of the two countries, both at London and Philadelphia: Their correspondence produced a mutual wish on both sides to establish a treaty of commerce, and a friendly adjustment of all complaints. The President of the United States, accordingly nominated Mr. John Jay, chief justice of the United States, as an envoy extraordinary to the court of London. After a short passage, Mr. Jay arrived in London, where he met with a polite reception, and negotiated the *Treaty of Peace, Commerce and Navigation*.

The Treaty arrived in Philadelphia in March 1795; it was shortly after submitted to the Senate for their consent; they returned it to the President on the 24th of June, and advised the conditional ratification thereof.

About the 30th of the same month it was submitted to the public through the medium of the news-papers. It now became the general topic of conversation; it was placed in all the different points of view of which it was susceptible, and in many of which it could not admit.

It met with great opposition: addresses and resolutions were received from all the commercial towns of the union; some advising its ratification, others disapproving of it in *toto*. This opposition was viewed by the President in a very serious light; he considered the subject and weighed all the arguments which had been advanced against it; his own opinion was not in favour it, but he did not wish to differ from the Senate, and thought that it would be better to ratify it in the manner they had advised; to this measure he was also induced, as Mr. Jay had asserted "that no better terms could possibly be obtained; and that obstinacy in rejecting the settlement, might be serious." The President therefore assented, and ratifications were exchanged, with the suspension of the most objectionable article.

This transaction is perhaps the most unfortunate that occurred to his Excellency during the whole period of his Presidency. Those opposed to the treaty did not fail that could impress upon the minds of the citizens gross falsehoods; such as, that the treaty contained no reciprocal advantages, that the benefits were all on the side of Britain; that their rights were not only neglected, but absolutely sold; that it was made with the design of oppressing the French, and contrary to every principle of gratitude and sound policy.

The first session of the fourth Congress met at Philadelphia, in December, 1795. The President in a speech informed them that negotiations were on foot for the adjustment of affairs with the hostile Indians, and also with the Dey and Regency of Algiers; that he had received assurances of a speedy and satisfactory conclusion of the negotiations with Spain; that with the advice of the Senate he had ratified a treaty with Britain, upon a condition which excepts part of one article. He recommended a review of the military establishment, and to make provision for garrisoning and securing the western

posts which were to be delivered up by the British. He informed them that a state of the finance and appropriations necessary for the ensuing year would be laid before them, as also statements relative to the mint, progress in providing materials for building frigates, state of fortifications, and military magazines, &c. He concluded with a recommendation of temperate discussion and mutual forbearance in subjects where a difference of opinion may be apt to arise.

A warm and lengthy discussion took place in the House of Representatives relative to the British treaty. Both sides of the question were ably supported; few subjects had ever come before the House, upon which so many members delivered their sentiments. On the 24th of March, 1796, they came to a resolution, requesting the President to lay before the House, a copy of the instructions to Mr. Jay, together with his correspondence and other documents relative to that treaty. To this request the President gave a positive refusal; he assured the House, that he had always endeavoured to harmonize with the other branches of the government, and that he had never withheld any information which the constitution enjoined him to give. But that the nature of foreign negotiations required caution and secrecy before the Senate; that the constitution empowered him to make treaties with the consent of that body, but that it would establish a dangerous precedent to admit a right in the House of Representatives to demand and have all papers respecting negotiations with foreign powers, after the treaties were finally concluded and ratified, and the assent of that house not necessary to their validity.

We deem it unnecessary to enter into a history of the differences which took place with the republic of France, as they are so recent as to be generally remembered; suffice it to observe, that during the whole period in which General Washington sat at the helm of public affairs, his whole conduct uniformly exhibited moderation and prudence, magnanimity and firmness, wisdom and virtue.

The period of General Washington's second election to the office of Chief Magistrate being nearly expired,

he put on a determined resolution to retire from public affairs, and enjoy his declining years in private life. Upon this momentous occasion, resigning a charge which he at first accepted through his enthusiasm for the principles of *rational liberty*, he was impressed with the purest wishes for the future happiness of that republic, which he had devoted the early, the mature, and a portion of his declining years to establish. And as a testimony of pure regard, he published the following masterly address to his fellow-citizens.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

Of his Excellency GEORGE WASHINGTON, Esq. President of the United States, announcing his intention of retiring from all public employment.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens,

The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest; no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice, that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience, in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me, as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstance have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary; I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is to terminate the career of my political life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that

debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country, for the many honours it has conferred upon me ; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me ; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected.—Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows, that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence ; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual ; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained ; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue ; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplations, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor

can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety, and your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union, to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned: and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of *American*, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together: the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprize and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South, in the same intercourse, benefitting by the same agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow, and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East, supplies requisite to its growth and comfort; and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets* for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one *nation*.—Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and what is of inestimable value, they must derive from

Union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighbouring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues would stimulate and embitter.—Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those over-grown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty; in this sense, it is that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire.—Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere?—Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. The Union is a full and complete experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who, in any quarter, may endeavour to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union, it occurs as matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterising parties by *Geographical* discriminations, "*Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western*;" whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief, that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations: they tend to render alien

to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had an useful lesson on this head: they have seen, in the negociation by the executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at the event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them, of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic states, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the *Mississippi*: they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great-Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the *Union* by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a government for the whole is indispensable.—No alliances, however strict, between the parts, can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances, in all times, have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true *Liberty*. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government; but,

the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with real design to direct, controul, counteract, or awe the regular deliberations and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard,

by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country ; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion ; and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interest, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigour as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty, is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is indeed little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular references to the founding them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments more or less stifled, controuled, or repressed ; but in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissention, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism.—But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual : and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight)

the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public counsels, and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This, within certain limits, is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favour upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution, in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions of the others,

has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern : some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in a way which the constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation ; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil, any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice ? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure ; reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric ?

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security,

cherish public credit. One method of preserving it, is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace; but remembering also, that timely disbursements to prepare for danger, frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives; but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate.

To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue: that to have revenue, there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects, (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue, which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations: cultivate peace and harmony with all: religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be, that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt, but, in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it?—Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature.—Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against

particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another, disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and untractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.

Hence, frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests.—The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts, through passion, what reason would reject; at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility, instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty of nations, has been the victim.

So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another, produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favourite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld: And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favourite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference

for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment to a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove, that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive-partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see the danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even to second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connexion as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith.—Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables

us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance: when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality, we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own, to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humour, or caprice?

'Tis our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it: for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary, and would be unwise, to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony and a liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying, by gentle means, the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary,

and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that 'tis folly in one nation to look for disinterested favours from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from nation to nation. 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will controul the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations: But, if I may even flatter myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to, to moderate the fury of party-spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompence for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still-subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right

to take, and was bound in duty and interest, to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligations which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error; I am, nevertheless, too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. *Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.*

Relying on its kindness in this, as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man, who views in it the natural soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations; I anticipate, with pleasing expectation, that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens,

the benign influence of good laws under a free government; the ever-favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.

G. WASHINGTON.

*United States,
17th September, 1796.*

On the 7th of December, 1796, President Washington delivered his last speech to the representatives of the people at the opening of the second session of the fourth Congress. We regret that our contracted limits will not permit of inserting it verbatim. In this address he communicates information respecting the measures taken for carrying into effect treaties with the Indian nations, Great-Britain, Spain, and Algiers. He likewise informs, that measures are in operation for effecting treaties with the Regencies of Tunis and Tripoli. He wishes the United States to look to the means, and to set about the gradual creation of a navy; so that a future war of Europe may not find our commerce in the same unprotected state in which it was found by the present.

He then proceeds to recommend the establishment of certain branches of manufacture on public account; *particularly those which are of a nature essential to the furnishing and equipping of the public force in time of war.*

He judiciously recommends the institution of a Board of Agriculture, composed of proper characters, charged with collecting and diffusing information, and enabled, by premiums and small pecuniary aids, to encourage and assist a spirit of discovery and improvement. Experience had proved this to be a cheap instrument of immense national benefit. He then recalls the attention of Congress, to a subject, he had before proposed to their consideration, the expediency of establishing a national university, and also a military academy. He points out as motives to the institution of a national university, the assimilation of the principles, opinions, and manners of our countrymen, by the common education of a portion of our youth from every quarter, and remarks that the

more homogeneous our citizens can be made in these particulars, the greater will be the prospect of our permanent union: and that a primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of GOVERNMENT. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? and what duty can be more pressing on its Legislature, than to patronize a plan for communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?

The institution of a military accademy, he also observes is recommended by cogent reasons. However pacific, says he, the general policy of a nation may be, it ought never to be without an adequate stock of military knowledge, for emergencies.

The following important paragraph is verbatim: "The compensations to the officers of the United States, in various instances, and in none more than in respect to the most important stations, appear to call for legislative revision. The consequences of a defective provision are of serious import to the government. If private wealth is to supply the defect of public contribution, it will greatly contract the sphere within which the selection of character for office is to be made, and will proportionably diminish the probability of a choice of men able, as well as upright. Besides, that it would be repugnant to the vital principles of our government, virtually to exclude from public trusts, talents and virtue, unless accompanied by wealth."

The President then expresses his regret at the unpleasant circumstances which have occurred relative to the French republic; his ardent wish being to maintain cordial harmony, as far as is consistent with the rights and honour of our country.

The House of Representatives he informed, that the revenues of the United States continued in a state of progressive improvement: and are invited to take such further measures as will ascertain, to our country, the speedy extinguishment of the public debt.

He then concluded his address to both Houses of Congress, in the following words: "My solicitude to see the militia of the United States placed on an efficient establishment, has been so often and so ardently express-

ed, that I shall but barely recal the subject to your view, on the present occasion; at the same time, I shall submit to your inquiry, whether our harbours are yet sufficiently secured."

"The situation in which I now stand, for the last time, in the midst of the representatives of the people of the United States, naturally recalls the period, when the administration of the present form of government commenced; and I cannot omit the occasion to congratulate you, and my country, on the success of the experiment; nor to repeat my fervent prayer to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and Sovereign Arbiter of Nations, that his providential care may still be extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the people may be preserved; and that the government which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties may be perpetual.

On Saturday, the 4th of March, 1797, *John Adams*, Esq. who was elected the successor of *President Washington*, attended the Senate and Representatives of the United States, and took his oath of office, according to the directions of the constitution. The ceremony afforded a spectacle of high satisfaction and delight to every genuine republican. To behold a fellow-citizen, raised by the voice of the people, to be the first magistrate of a free nation, and to behold at the same time *George Washington*, who lately filled the presidential chair, attending the inauguration of the successor in office, as a private citizen, beautifully exemplify the sublime simplicity and excellence of republican government.

The last official act of *President Washington*, is a letter to the Secretary of State, dated March 3, 1797. It respects certain forged letters, which were published in the years 1777 and 1796, and obtruded on the public as his. They were published at the two most critical periods of his life, with the view of striking at the integrity of his motives, of wounding his character, and of deceiving the people. At the conclusion, therefore of his public employments, he deemed it a duty which he owed to himself, to his country, and to truth, to detail the circumstances, and solemnly to declare, that the letters (the dates of which he recites) are base forgeries,

were never written by him, and that he never saw or heard of them, until they appeared in print. During the period in which he held the supreme command of the army, and his civil administration, the purity of his own mind prevented him from contradicting the falshood by any public declaration; but, upon his retiring to private life, and not knowing how soon a more serious event might take place, he made this public declaration, and requested that it might be deposited in the office of the department of state, as a testimony of the truth to the present generation and to posterity.

Extract of a letter written to General Knox the day before the termination of his office, exhibiting the sentiments with which he contemplated this event, and with which he viewed the unceasing calumnies with which his whole administration continued to be aspersed.

“ To the wearied traveller who sees a resting place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do *this* in peace, is too much to be endured by *some*. To misrepresent my motives; to reprobate my politics; and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration;—are objects which cannot be relinquished by those who will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political system. The consolation, however, which results from conscious rectitude, and the approving voice of my country unequivocally expressed by its representatives—deprives their sting of its poison, and places in the same point of view both the weakness and malignity of their efforts.

“ Although the prospect of retirement is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates whom I love. Among these, be assured you are one.”

ON the 22d of March, 1797, General Washington took farewell of all public employment, and left Philadelphia for his estate at Mount Vernon. In every town through which he passed on his way, he received the grateful and affectionate addresses which were so justly due to his merits from an enlightened and grateful people.

Having thus amply described the *august Washington* in his public character and official capacity, suffer us, for a moment, to follow him in private, and take a view of him in the character of a plain citizen in his rural residence at Mount Vernon.

The virtuous simplicity which distinguished the private life of General Washington, tho' less known than the dazzling splendour of his military achievements, is not less edifying in example, or worthy the attention of his countrymen. The conspicuous character he has acted on the theatre of human affairs, the uniform dignity with which he sustained his part amidst difficulties of the most discouraging nature, and the glory of having arrived through them at the hour of triumph, have made many official and literary persons, on both sides of the ocean, ambitious of a correspondence with him. These correspondencies unavoidably engrossed a great portion of his time; and the communications contained in them, combined with the numerous periodical publications and news-papers which he perused, rendered him, as it were, the *focus of political intelligence for the new world*. Nor were his conversations with well informed men less conducive to bring him acquainted with the various events which happened in the different countries of the globe. Every foreigner of distinction, who travelled in America, made it a point to visit him. Members of Congress and other dignified personages seldom passed his house without calling to pay their respects. As another source of information, it may be mentioned, that many literary productions were sent to him annually by their authors in Europe; and that there is scarcely one work written in America, on any art, science, or subject, which did not seek his protection, or which was not offered to him as a token of gratitude. Mechanical inventions were frequently submitted to him for his approbation,

and natural curiosities presented to him for his investigation. But the multiplicity of epistolary applications, often on the remains of some business which happened when he was in office, sometimes on subjects foreign to his situation, frivolous in their nature, and intended merely to gratify the vanity of the writers by drawing answers from him, were truly distressing and almost incredible. His benignity in answering, perhaps increased the number. Did he not husband every moment to the best advantage, it would not have been in his power to notice the vast variety of subjects that claimed his attention.

In his manner of living he was extremely regular; temperate and industrious. He rose winter and summer at the dawn of day, generally read or wrote sometimes before breakfast: breakfasted about seven o'clock on Indian hoeecake and tea, and often rode immediately to his different farms, and remained with his labourers till a little after two o'clock, when he returned; at three he dined, commonly on a single dish, and drank from half a pint to a pint of Madeira wine; this, with one small dish of tea which he took half an hour before the setting of the sun, constituted his whole sustenance till the next day. His table, however, was always furnished with elegance and exuberance, but was void of pomp: and whether he had company or not, he remained an hour at table in familiar conversation. His temper was of a serious cast, and his countenance carried the impression of thoughtfulness; yet he perfectly relished a pleasant story, an unaffected sally of wit, or a burlesque description. After dinner he applied himself to business, and about nine retired to rest; but when he had company he politely attended upon them till they wished to withdraw.—Agriculture was his favourite employment, he made observations on the produce of lands, and endeavoured to throw new light upon the business of the farmer; linen and woollen cloaths were manufactured under his roof, and order and economy were established in all his departments, both within and without doors. Mrs. Washington presided over the whole, and united to the qualities of an excellent farmer's wife, that simple dignity which ought to characterise a woman whose hus-

band has acted so distinguished a part on the public theatre.—Such is the history of the private life of this great character.

In 1798, the unparalleled treatment which the American ministers received at Paris from the republic of France, left little ground to hope for any amicable accommodation with that republic, in consequence of which, the military forces of the United States were greatly augmented, and the President, with the advice of the Senate, appointed *George Washington, Lieutenant General and commander in chief of all the armies raised or to be raised by the United States*: this wise and judicious appointment was attended with the happiest effect, the virtue of a general so well experienced in war, established the national dignity and independence, and inspired the citizens with enthusiasm. On receiving the appointment, the General expressed a wish that it had fallen upon a man less advanced in years, and better qualified to encounter the vicissitudes of war; he recurred to his determination of closing his life in retirement and peace, but the conduct of the directory of France towards our country, he said “excited in his breast corresponding sentiments with the rest of his countrymen,” in consequence of which, he accepted the appointment with this reserve, that “he should not be called into the field, until the army was in a situation to require his presence, or it became indispensable by the urgency of circumstances:” he informed the President, “he could not accept of any emolument annexed to the appointment, before entering into a situation to incur expense.”

He held this command, and contributed his advice and assistance towards the arrangement and organization of the army until the 14th of December 1799, when it pleased Divine Providence to remove him from this life; he was in his 68th year, and in the enjoyment of perfect health; the disorder of which he died was an inflammatory sore throat, which proceeded from a slight cold.

On Friday, the 13th, he rode out to one of his plantations, and was much wet by the rain, on returning. He was taken with the *croup* that night; but from humanity to his servants and tenderness to his physician, *very unfortunately* declined sending for medical aid, until daylight on Saturday morning.

Before Dr. Craik arrived at Mount Vernon, the General had been bled by one of his overseers. The doctor repeated the same immediately; to whom the General observed, "he had sent for him too late;" and seemed to have a presentiment of his dissolution; Doctors Dick and Brown also attended.

As his respiration became difficult, he said calmly, "*doctors, I die hard.*" But notwithstanding the excruciating agonies of his violent disease, he tranquilly asked several questions during the evening. About fifteen minutes before he died, (which was between 11 and 12 o'clock, on Saturday night, the 14th of December) he said to Doctor Craik, "*doctor, what is the clock? how long am I to continue in this situation?*" The doctor answered, "*Not long sir?*" He then rejoined, with the firmest countenance imaginable, "*I have no fear, doctor, to die.*"

Mrs. Washington was at the bed side with his family, and a number of domestics in the room. He would not wound their sensibility by taking a formal leave of any one.—At last his breathing grew shorter, *he closed his eyes and mouth with his own hands*, and expired!—Thus did the last moments of this venerable man correspond with the whole tenor of his well-spent life. He died with perfect resignation to the will of Heaven, and in full possession of his reason, not a groan or complaint escaped him!

His body was entombed, with solemn honours and funeral pomp, in the family vault, upon the estate of Mount Vernon, attended by the clergy, military, masonic brethren, and a numerous concourse of citizens.

Near the head of the coffin were inscribed the words *Surge ad Judicium*; about the middle, *Gloria Deo*; and, on the silver plate, *General George Washington departed this life 14th Dec. Ætat 68.*

Three general discharges by the artillery, cavalry, and infantry, paid the last tribute of respect to the entombed commander in chief of the American armies.

The sun was now setting—Alas, the son of glory was set. No, the name of WASHINGTON will live for ever!

From Vernon's Mount behold the hero rise ;
 Resplendent forms attend him thro' the skies !
 The shades of war-worn veterans round him throng,
 And lead enwrap'd their honour'd chief along.
 A laurel wreath the immortal WARREN bears,
 An arch triumphal MERCER's hand prepares ;
 Young LAURENS, erst th' avenging bolt of war,
 With port majestic, guides the glittering car ;
 MONTGOMERY's godlike form directs the way,
 And GREEN unfolds the gates of endless day ;
 Whilst angels, " trumpet-tongu'd," proclaim thro' air,
 " Due honours for THE FIRST OF MEN prepare !"

The melancholy intelligence of the death of General Washington, was every where received throughout the United States, with sensations of sorrow and regret ; the houses of Congress for a period adjourned ; they condoled with the President of the United States, on the loss our country had sustained in the death of her worthiest citizen ; they went in mourning, and requested the President to issue his proclamation, recommending the citizens throughout the Union, to wear black crape on the left arm for thirty days ; all the state assemblies followed the example : orders were issued from the war-office, navy department, &c. requesting the officers to wear crape on the left arm for six months, and the vessels of the navy to put on mourning for one week, by wearing their colours half mast high.

Orders were issued by the direction of the President of the United States, announcing to the army the death of its *beloved chief*, and requested the military honours therein, specifying to be paid at the several stations of the army.

The Senate and House of Representatives of the United States enacted, " that a marble monument be erected in the capitol in the city of Washington, to the memory of General Washington ; and that his family be requested to permit his body to be deposited under it ; and that the monument be so designed as to commemorate the great military and political events of his life. That there be a funeral procession, and a public oration delivered on the occasion." To the above resolution

Mrs. Washington assented, sacrificing her private wishes and individual feelings to the public will. The public procession took place in Philadelphia, on Thursday, December the 26th; the ceremony was judiciously conducted; perhaps there never was a greater display of public mourning, solemnity, and respect, exhibited in the western hemisphere; the arrangements united every description of public and private character, civil and military; the funeral service, adapted with great solemnity to the occasion, was pronounced by bishop White, the deceased being of the episcopal church; after which, General Lee, who was appointed by Congress for that purpose, delivered the funeral oration: we shall not attempt a report of this admirable eulogium, of which the public are already possessed, convinced that it would suffer by the attempt.

Having pursued this distinguished man throughout his public life and in his private retreat, it only now remains that we describe his person, which bears a very great analogy to the qualifications of his mind.

General Washington was a tall well made man, rather above the common size; his frame was robust, and his constitution vigorous, and capable of enduring great fatigue. His features were manly and bold, and his eyes of a bluish cast, and very lively; his hair a deep brown, his face rather long and marked with the small-pox; his complexion sun burnt, and without much colour, and his countenance sensible, composed, and thoughtful; there was a remarkable air of dignity about him, with a striking degree of gracefulness: He had an excellent understanding without much quickness; was strictly just, vigilant, and generous; as a military man, he was brave, enterprising, and cautious: An affectionate husband, a faithful friend, a father to the deserving; gentle in his manners, in temper rather reserved; a total stranger to religious prejudices, which have so often excited Christians of one denomination to cut the throats of those of another; in his morals irreproachable; he was never known to exceed the bounds of the most rigid temperance: in a word, all his friends and acquaintance universally allow that no man ever united in his own person, a more perfect alliance of the virtues of a philosopher with the ta-

lents of a statesman and a general. Candour, sincerity, affability, and simplicity, seem to have been the striking features of his character. The best portraits ever taken of him, are those painted by the ingenious Mr. Stewart, of Germantown, and the best engraving is the large mezzotinto done by Mr. Savage, of Philadelphia.

Such is the life and character of the man to whom America intrusted her important cause, and she has had every reason to be satisfied with her choice; and most ungrateful would she be to the Great Disposer of human events, were she not to render him unremitting thanks for having provided her with such a citizen at such a crisis.

Most nations have been favoured with some patriotic deliverer.—The Israelites had their Moses; Rome had her Camillus; Greece her Leonidas; Sweden her Gustavus; and England her Hampdens, her Russels, and her Sydneys; but these illustrious heroes, though successful in preserving and defending their country, did not, like WASHINGTON, form or establish an empire.



AN ORATION,

UPON

THE DEATH

OF

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON,

DELIVERED IN THE STATE-HOUSE, AT TRENTON,

ON THE 14TH OF JANUARY, 1800,

By THE REV. SAMUEL STANHOPE SMITH, D. D.

PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW-JERSEY.

GREAT GOD! we adore thy Sovereign Providence, which hath smitten the father of his country, and left a nation in tears!

My fellow-citizens! your griefs are manly—they are approved of Heaven—you mourn a father. All America mingles her sighs with yours—foreign nations, admiring his achievements and his virtues, will think that liberty has lost a protector among them—and even that great people from whom we wrested our freedom and independence, forgetting that they have lost an empire by his wisdom and valour, will honour him with their griefs, and their praises.

His country is erecting monuments and statues to his memory. Brass and marble shall express his glory—But brass and marble will decay, and the glory that is committed to them alone will perish. Eloquence and history shall rear to him more durable trophies. Historians shall immortalize their page with the name of WASHINGTON; and future orators shall quote it with the names of Epaminondas, of Aristides, and of Cato, to illuminate their discourse, and to enforce, by great examples, the virtues of a disinterested and heroic

patriotism. But his most lasting and most noble monument shall be the affections of his countrymen, who will transmit their admiration of him as an increasing inheritance to their latest posterity. To testify the esteem, and to announce to the world the profound regrets, of a grateful country, poets, and orators, and the ministers of religion, have come forth to pronounce and re-echo his praises throughout all America. How sublime, and how singular the glory! thus to receive the voluntary homage of a free, and a great people--the homage of equals paid, not to pre-eminence of rank, but of virtue--not extorted by the command of power, but the unconstrained effusion of the heart! I also, at your invitation, appear among them, with a zeal disproportioned to my strength, to pay my feeble tribute to the memory of a man deservedly so dear to every worthy and honest American--But, ah! I feel, in the beginning, that my words are unable to reach the conceptions of my own mind, and that they must fall far below the ideas and emotions which already occupy yours. One advantage, indeed, I may derive from hence, the only one that inability can yield, which is, that, when I have bestowed on this illustrious citizen the highest praises, I shall have the testimony of your hearts that I have even said less than the truth--I shall have no need to have recourse to the base arts of flattery to praise the most modest of men, who spurned from him, while living, all insincerity and adulation.--Oh! if the occasion, and the presence of this numerous and enlightened assembly, could light up within me a spark of that eloquence which they are so well fitted to enkindle, and could raise above itself a genius so far inferior to the subject, and the demands of public expectation, with what noble ideas should I fill your minds! What a warm impression would the recital of achievements, and the display of talents and virtues like his, make upon your hearts! Certainly no hero, modern, or ancient, has ever offered to the orator a more illustrious or fertile subject of that eloquence that is calculated to touch the heart, or to raise men to the heights of virtue by great examples.

In whom have ever shone with more splendor the talents of war, in creating an army; in successfully

maintaining himself in the face of a superior enemy; in inspiring with courage raw troops; in attaching soldiers to order and their country in the midst of extreme hardships, and the injustice of their country itself; in seizing victories by an enterprizing bravery, when enterprize was safe for the republic, or in conducting retreats that gained him no less glory than victories; in vanquishing his enemies by a firm and undaunted courage, or consuming and wasting them away by a wise and noble patience? Where can we find a conqueror so humble, so disinterested, so devoted solely to his country—so serene, so sublime in adversity—so modest in the midst of triumphs—in danger so intrepid and calm—and possessing such controul over events by his prudence and perseverance?

Other nations begin their eulogiums of great men, by tracing their birth to some royal house, or some noble family.—This is the praise of slaves. Virtue, talents, services, are our nobility. What glory could he have derived from a noble parentage, whose virtues would have added their chief splendor to thrones? Such adventitious and accidental distinctions might have lessened, but could not have augmented, that high and solid fame which he now possesses. The name of WASHINGTON is surrounded with a lustre that eclipses that of kings: And not his smallest praise is, that it is all his own—it is derived from the intrinsic worth and merit of the man—not a ray of it is borrowed—his father was a plain but virtuous citizen.

Socrates believed that he was attended by a Genius which often gave him council and instruction, and watched over his safety.—The Genius of Brutus abandoned him at the plains of Philippi; but the guardian Genius of *our* hero, which never forsook him, was that Divine Providence, which he always devoutly acknowledged, and which seemed to preside over him with a peculiar predilection from his birth, giving his mind that happy impulse and direction, and combining those fortunate coincidences of events, which we have seen leading to success and fame in all the important scenes of his life.

His first education was directed only to solid and useful attainments. Mathematical science, which contributes, perhaps, more than any other to strengthen the

mind, and which is so intimately connected with the military art, was his earliest, and his favourite study. His exercises were manly and vigorous; his constitution was active and strong; his port noble and commanding; his person graceful and majestic; his countenance expressive of that benignity, that honour, that grandeur of sentiment, that profound reflection, for which he was distinguished. But these are vulgar praises. He had a mind capable of combining all the interests of his country; a discernment capable of penetrating and defeating all the designs of his enemies; a heart capable of daring every danger in its defence.

His dawn of life gave some auspicious presages of the splendour of its meridian. Scarcely had he attained his twentieth year, when he was employed by the government of Virginia, his native state, in an enterprize as hazardous, as it was honourable, which required all the prudence of age united with all the vigour and fire of youth. The armies of France threatened to environ these states, then colonies of Great Britain, and to inclose them in a chain of fortifications from the lakes to New-Orleans; and they were artfully attaching to their own interests, and exciting against us, the fury of the savage nations. Young Washington was charged to remonstrate with their commander, to penetrate their designs, to estimate their force, to observe their works, and to conciliate, if possible, the affections of the native tribes. In the discharge of this trust, you see him, at an inclement season of the year, traverse the immense forest alone. Amidst incessant rains and snows, and over vast rivers, rendered almost impassable by ice, and surrounded with lurking parties of hostile savages, he pursues his course. When his horses are exhausted, he continues on foot his difficult and dangerous route; he observes every thing with the eye of a warrior; he marks out scites for fortresses; he measures the fortresses of the enemy; he displays a firmness of mind in the greatest dangers, a patience of fatigue in the greatest difficulties, and a consummate address in the conduct of the whole, that would have been worthy the reputation of the oldest commanders; and finally, executes an arduous commission in a manner that deserved and obtained universal

applause. At an age when other youth are pursuing only pleasures, and softening their minds and bodies by indulgence, he is already hardening himself for the toils and dangers of war—he is practically studying mankind—and applying the science of Euclid and of Vauban to the defence of his country.

The WAR, which then menaced these infant settlements, soon began to rage. The brave but impetuous Braddock was commissioned to defend, in America, the honour, and the interests, of Britain. In all the pride of European discipline, and British valour, he despised an enemy who fought by stealth, and scorned the admonitions of Washington, who was only a youth, but who was a warrior by intuition, and who perceived, in a moment, every change which that formidable art ought to assume from new circumstances. Surrounded in the forest by an enemy invisible, but dreadful, his ranks cut down by a hidden fire, his principal officers slain, and himself mortally wounded, amidst carnage and death, where valour was useless and discipline only offered surer marks to the destructive aim of the foe, terror and despair overwhelmed every heart. Then our hero, all calm and intrepid, and now left to pursue his own ideas, was seen, on the spot to change the whole order of battle. With his brave Virginians he protected the astonished battalions of Britain, covered them under the buckler of America, and in the name of his country, saved those armies, whom in her defence, he was one day to conquer. They shouted him their deliverer; and the shores of Europe and America re-echoed the applauses of the camp.

But it was, when America called him to the head of her armies, in the long and bloody war which she was obliged to maintain, in defence of her rights, and her existence, again that nation, become haughty and unjust, that he displayed the full extent, and variety, of his genius. Britain had cherished her colonies in the new world merely as instruments of commerce, till their growing prosperity rendered them at length an object both of avarice, and of ambition. Flushed with her triumphs under the auspices of the great Chatham, and rejecting, after profiting by, the counsels of that sublime

statesman, she had already, in imagination, swallowed our treasures—divided our provinces among her princes—our cities and fields among her nobles—and destined our husbandmen to be tenants and labourers for her. America, roused to defend rights that were dearer to her than her existence, but unprepared to meet an attack which she had not expected from a parent nation, had nothing to oppose to this formidable invasion but her unconquerable love of liberty, her virtue and Washington.

How unequal was the conflict between a young country, in the very infancy of her improvements—possessing, as yet, only a few husbandmen scattered over an unwieldy territory—nursed in habits of veneration and obedience to her invader—without an organized government to conduct the necessary operations of her defence—destitute of clothing, of ammunition, and almost of arms for her few soldiers—and rendered still more impotent by an injudicious system of finance bottomed upon no funds—and, on the other hand, a mighty nation in the summit of her glory—grown old in victories—whose numerous and veteran armies had just humbled the first power in Europe—whose fleets covered and ruled the ocean—and who commanded by her commerce, half the wealth of the world! If we counted only the resources of America, and the number of her troops, would we not pronounce that she was already vanquished? But the talents of her leader were in the room of armies, and of treasures; and his success undeniably ranks him among the greatest generals in the universe. He had to compensate, by address, the defect of energy in the government—to make personal influence supply the want of money, and of almost every necessary for a camp—to manage with skill the caprices of liberty itself, which are so often ruinous to its own interests—to conciliate to the service men irritated by disappointment, and the injustice, though perhaps, the necessary injustice, of their country—and to raise the courage of those who were already subdued by want. You see him, at one time, patiently preparing the train of events for some great effect—at another, anticipating them by a bold and decisive stroke. Sometimes he stoops upon victory like

an eagle—and sometimes he renders it sure by a prudent delay. He always rises from defeat like a conqueror, and, in the end, obliges the enemy to abandon the post which they had seized.—In all changes of fortune, he is serene, collected, and sublime. Success cannot elate him. No reverse can sink his courage, or shake his firmness. And you behold him with equal admiration, when compelled to retire, with the broken remains of his army across the Jerseys, as when he entered in triumph over the demolished fortifications of York, and, by one splendid action, put a period to the war.

The details of his exploits I leave to the historian. They will instruct the remotest ages. They are still recent in your memory. The children of America repeat them with enthusiasm. His first act was to expel the enemy from Boston, and to restore to the nation that important capital. Afterwards, when in the face of a thousand ships, and an immense army, he was obliged to retire before superior numbers from the open and defenceless city of New-York, if, for a moment, ignorance and impatience impeached his courage, or his skill, the returning reflection of his fellow-citizens approved his prudence, and applauded his firmness. Conscious of doing what a patriotic general ought to do, he felt all the humiliation of unfounded censure; but he was willing to bear the folly, and the injustice, of his countrymen for the salvation of his country. He was not among those frantic heroes, who, to gain the vain reputation of a thoughtless bravery, will hazard the safety of their country itself. Tho' he loved glory, the interests of America were dearer to him than his own fame. Her circumstances, at that moment, imperiously forbade him to risk the existence of his small army. His lofty soul was incapable of fear: He even seemed to acquire new energies at the approach of danger; but a cool and comprehensive wisdom tempered the ardent impulses of his courage; and he now resolved, like a great general, to expose nothing to hazard which he could defend by prudence, and not to force fortune where he was sure of gaining her by a wise delay. He retired before the enemy, always commanding their respect by his well chosen positions, till, having gained the farther shore of

the Delaware, he there arrested their progress, and there triumphantly turned the tide of war. The place on which I stand is consecrated by his triumphs—your streets have flowed with hostile blood—here victory first returned to his standard, which, for a moment, she had abandoned. Trenton! and Princeton! names rendered dear to your country by exploits that will be forever combined with them in history, on your plains hope was first rekindled in the bosom of America.

Despondency had begun to seize the public mind. It was necessary to restore its vigour by some brilliant action; and Washington who, at one time, so prudently retired from danger, was now determined to put all to hazard—he had been willing to survive misfortune only to retrieve it—he was now prepared to die, or resolved to conquer.—I see him in the depth of winter, with an army scarcely half clothed, and small in number, his mind labouring with some vast, and almost desperate, purpose, struggling with the ice, and with the torrent, forcing his way across the Delaware. Supported by a few militia, brave but undisciplined, his circumstances were infinitely critical. An impassable river was now behind him, a superior enemy in front, separated from him only by a small ravine. The evening closed under a tremendous cannonade. Both armies, lighting their fires, and setting their guards, were waiting, in anxious suspense, the approach of the morning. The fate of America seemed to be staked on the event of one great and decisive battle. Then the military talents of the American hero shone forth with new splendour, and revived, and fixed, the wavering confidence of his country. By one of those happy strokes of genius that distinguish only great generals, he broke all the plans of his foes, and rolled the waves of misfortune back upon themselves. In the night he passed unperceived the army in his front, attacked an important post in their rear, carried it sword in hand, and awakened them to a sense of all their danger, and their shame, by the sounds of victory from Princeton. Princeton! thy fields, rendered sacred by the blood of Mercer, and illustrious by the actions of Washington, shall be forever connected in history with his glory—thy sons shall hereafter vie with one another in eloquence

and song to celebrate his fame, and, pointing to the spot where Washington triumphed, shall perceive their genius kindled with new fire, and from him derive, while they confer, immortality.

The plan of the general was to hasten to Brunswick, and seize the enemy's arsenal, stores, and military chest, deposited there; but his troops, harrassed and exhausted with incessant labours, marches, and conflicts, were unable to accomplish the grandeur of his views. The British commander, in the utmost consternation, flew to their protection. The American, with a wisdom worthy the celebrated dictator who saved Rome, immediately occupied the hills that overlooked the strong position of the enemy, on the summits of which he hung like some dark and terrible cloud impregnated with thunder, and continually threatening to burst upon them.* He straitens their quarters—he drives in their posts—he cuts off their parties—he reanimates the courage of the militia of New-Jersey; and, by practising them in daily combats, renders them at length, under the conduct of a few gallant officers, worthy to fight by the side of veterans—He expels the enemy from a state which they had so cruelly ravaged.

By the aid of their navy they were enabled rapidly to transport themselves to the greatest distances; and the American general was obliged to be ready to meet them at every point. He met them on the Brandywine, where the timidity, or the treachery of the men employed to bring him intelligence of their movements, defeated one of the wisest and most brilliant plans of the war, which would probably have put in his possession their artillery, their baggage, and their whole camp.† But Heaven had

* *The image which Hannibal applied to Fabius.*

† *The intention of the general was, to permit the enemy to cross the Brandywine above him, and, while they imagined they were taking him in flank, to push forward his main body, and surprise their camp on the other side of the river, which would have cut off their retreat, and been probably followed by their total ruin. His runners, whether intimidated, or corrupted, persisted to assure*

resolved to protract their fate ; and they entered the capital of Pennsylvania.

While encamped at the Valley Forge under every disadvantage to which a commander could be subject, and suffering the most cruel neglect, not to say injustice of his country, he surprised a division of their army on the heights of Germantown, and in the moment that victory was declaring for his arms, and their routed legions were fleeing in every direction, a voice, a whisper, one of those invisible and unaccountable accidents which so frequently decide the fate of battles, wrested the prize out of his hands. But his unconquerable energy, his infinite resources in misfortune, robbed them of all the fruits of their success. They dared no longer venture out of their intrenchments, and he held them enchained in Philadelphia.

The generals of Britain, contending in vain against the indefatigable courage, and the inexhaustible resources of the American hero, who, though at the head of a feeble and ill-appointed army, was often victorious, and who reaped even from defeat the fruits of victory, resolved to abandon to him Pennsylvania, as they had before yielded New-Jersey.

Then you saw him on the burning plains of Monmouth, rallying his broken van, and leading it on to a new charge ; exposing himself like a common soldier, present in every place at the same moment ; and while men were fainting, and dying in their ranks with fatigue, and heat, and thirst, refusing to rest, or to taste refreshment, till victory gave him a right to repose. With pleasure I see in this assembly your EXCELLENCY,* and so many other brave officers, who were there witnesses of his glory, and who bore no small share in the dangers and the honours of that memorable day.

him, in the most solemn manner, that the British forces had not crossed in the places where he certainly expected them, and deceived him in regard to their real movements, till it was too late to execute his design. He was compelled to retreat. And, a few days afterwards, when he offered them battle again in the Great-Valley, the elements fought against him.

* Governor HOWELL.

The twenty-ninth June gave rest to the northern states; and Britain, despairing to be able to contend with Washington, determined to bend all her force against the South. But there she met with the wise and gallant Greene, who was worthy to be the brother of Washington. Greene was cutting off her garrisons and her armies in detail. But her main army, under the conduct of the bravest and most enterprising of her generals, was still reserved to adorn the triumphs of the first hero of America.

Historians will relate with what admirable combination he formed the plan, and concerted its execution, with an ally separated from him by more than a thousand leagues, for surprising and entangling in his toils his active foe—with what address he diverted the attention of the British commanders—and how, after a march of four hundred miles, he had so amused and blinded them, that he still found his enemy in the place where he had determined to seize him.—America will for ever record that happy day in which her victorious chief saw Britain laying her last standards at his feet. I seem to participate with him that generous exultation, that noble triumph of soul, which, in this moment, he felt. Not that he was capable, with unmanly insolence, of exulting over a prostrate enemy, but he saw, in their fall, the salvation of his country. On the ruins of York he laid the immortal base of the republic. How delicious! How sublime was the moment! Britain was humbled*—America was delivered and avenged.

The war terminated, PEACE restored, and the liberties of the new world established on the firmest foundations, the concluding scene was the most august and interesting that the history of nations has, perhaps, ever

* *Such expressions as this cannot reasonably be supposed to be intended to cherish national prejudices, or to inflame national antipathies. They are used by the writers of every country in celebrating their eminent statesmen, and their heroes. They indicate sensations that were natural and lawful on the occasion, but are afterwards forgotten in the relations of amity, and commercial intercourse.*

presented.—Other conquerors have considered victory as the mean of grasping unlawful power.—The soul of Washington was more sublime.—He regarded in his victories only the peace and happiness of a great nation. A fine morality tempered and reigned in the midst of his heroic qualities. The character of a patriot he considered as superior to that of a hero; and to be a renowned warrior was less in his esteem, than to be a good man. He hastens, therefore, to the seat of Congress, to resign into the hands of the fathers of his country the powers with which they had invested him, and which he had so nobly employed in its defence.—August spectacle! Illustrious chief! He was so far elevated above the rest of mankind, that no way was left for him to become greater but by humbling himself. The hero enters the hall surrounded with all his virtues, his services, and his glories, of which no one but himself seemed to be unconscious. This awful assembly received him as the founder and the guardian of the republic. Every heart was big with emotion. Silently they retraced the scenes of affliction and danger through which they had passed together.—They recalled to mind the peace and freedom purchased by his arm.—They regarded with veneration that great man, who appeared more great and worthy of esteem in resigning, than he had done in gloriously using, his power. In an impressive speech he laid down all his public employments, and took of them an affectionate leave. At the contemplation of such rare virtue, and moved at the recollection of so many interesting scenes, tears of admiration and gratitude burst from every eye. The hero, touched with the general emotion, wet his cheek with a manly tear, while he deposited his sword under the laws, which he had covered with his shield.

The last act of a spectacle so affecting was an act of religion. Great example for legislators, rulers, warriors—for all who either possess elevated stations, or who aim at high and solid fame! In that august presence, he worships the Ruler of the Universe—he commends the interests of his dearest country to the protection of Almighty God—and there, in the temple of the laws, he offers to Heaven the incense of a nation from the altar

of his own pure and noble heart.—This done, he retires amidst the vows, and prayers, and blessings, of a grateful and admiring country, to the peaceful shade of Vernon.—Not like those heroes who build their glory on the misery of the human race, and whose restless souls are for ever tossed in the tempests of ambition, he sought only peace by war, and returned from its cruel and bloody fields with delight to the first innocent employments of human nature.

Let us contemplate him, a moment, in this Retirement, which he always chose with such predilection when the service of his country would permit him to enjoy it.

In private life he was as amiable, as virtuous, and as great, as he appeared sublime on the public theatre of the world. How many conquerors, renowned in history, have been great only while they acted a conspicuous part under the observation of mankind! The soul, in such a situation, perceives an artificial elevation—it assumes the sentiments of virtue corresponding to the grandeur of the objects that surround it. In private, it subsides into itself; and, in the ordinary details of life and conduct, the men, who seemed to be raised above others by the splendor of some rare occasions, now sink below them—they are degraded by their passions—those who were able to command armies, have lost the power of self-command—and, when they are not *heroes*, they are nothing. Washington was always equal to *himself*.—There was a dignity in the manner in which he performed the smallest things. A majesty surrounded him that seemed to humble those who approached him, at the same time that there was a benignity in his manners that invited their confidence and esteem. His virtues, always, elevated and splendid, shone only with a milder light by being placed in the vale of retirement. He was sincere, modest, upright, humane; a friend of religion; the idol of his neighbours as well as of his country; magnificent in his hospitality, but plain in his manners, and simple in his equipage. And the motives of these virtues we are not to seek in vain affectation of popularity, which has

often enabled the cunning and the artful to make great sacrifices to public opinion, but in the native impulse and goodness of his heart.—His emotions, naturally strong and ardent, as they are, perhaps, in all great men, he had completely subjected to the controul of reason, and placed under the guard of such a vigilant prudence, that he never suffered himself to be surprised by them. Philosophy and religion in his breast had obtained a noble triumph: And his first title to command over others was his perfect command of himself. Such a sublime idea had he formed of man that in him you never detected any of the littleness of the passions.—His consummate prudence, which was one of his most characteristic qualities, and which never forsook him for a moment, contributed to fix the affections and the confidence of his fellow-citizens, which he had acquired by his talents.—Eminently distinguished for his conjugal and domestic virtues, the perfect purity of his private morals added not a little to that dignity of character in which he was superior to all men. There is a majesty in virtue which commands the respect even of those who do not love it, and which gives to great talents their highest lustre.—Ah! if the ambitious knew, or were willing to estimate its influence on reputation, and its powerful command over the minds of men, they would study to be virtuous from self-interest.

Need I tell you, who know the terms on which he performed the greatest services that were ever rendered to a nation, how disinterested and noble was his nature? How dear would not a mercenary man have sold *his* toils, *his* dangers, and, above all, *his* successes? What schemes of grandeur, and of power, would not an ambitious man have built upon the affection of the people, and the army? The only wealth which He sought to draw from them was the riches of his country—the only reward, the love of his fellow-citizens, and the consciousness of his own heart.

His whole character was consistent. Equally industrious with his plough as with his sword, he esteemed idleness and inutility the greatest disgrace of man, whose powers attain perfection only by constant and vigorous action, and who is placed by providence in so many so-

cial relations, only to do good.—Every thing round him was marked by a dignified simplicity. While so many affect fastidiously to *display* their wealth in sumptuous edifices, and splendid equipages, and incur infinitely more expense to be envied and hated, than would be sufficient to make themselves adored, his mansion was as modest as his heart. Strangers from all nations who visited it, went, not to admire a magnificent pile, but to gratify a noble curiosity in seeing the first man in the world. Palaces, and columns, and porticos, would have shrunk beside him, and scarcely have been seen. Like the imperial palace of Marcus Aurelius at Rome, the plain and modest walls resembled some august temple, which has no ornament but the Deity that inhabits it.* You approached it with reverence as the retreat of a HERO, the venerable abode of all the VIRTUES. He had no need to seek a false glory by any exterior display of magnificence, who possessed such intrinsic worth and grandeur of soul. Every where he goes without any attendants but his virtues—he travels without pomp; but every one surrounds him, in imagination, with his victories, his triumphs. his glorious toils, his public services. How sublime is this simplicity! How superior to all the fastuous magnificence of luxury! Thus he lived, discharging, without ostentation, all the civil, social, and domestic, offices of life—temperate in his desires—faithful to his duties—retiring from fame, which every where pursued him—living like a beneficent deity in the bosom of his family, its delight and its glory.

Amiable woman! sole partner of his dearest pleasures, who enjoyed most intimately, and who best knew, his worth, your overwhelming griefs, the desolation of your heart, under this stroke, testify the preciousness of what you have lost. In the full tide of happiness, in a moment, in one terrible instant, more than empires has been ravished from your embrace. Oh! if a nation's tears can yield you any consolation, the tears of a nation are mingled with yours. But, alas! while they console, they remind you, by a new proof, of the value of what Heaven

* *A speech put by Mr. Thomas into the mouth of Apollonius a philosopher, and the friend of Marcus.*

has taken—has taken, perhaps in mercy, that, when your Saviour shall call also for you, earth may not have a rival to him in your heart.

But, my fellow-citizens, among the noblest ornaments of this extraordinary man, was his humility, and his respect for religion. Humility was the veil thro' which his virtues shone with a more amiable, because less dazzling, lustre. Never, in conversation, did you hear him mention those illustrious achievements, which had rendered his name so famous throughout the world. In reading his official letters, in which he is obliged by his duty to announce his successes, you would hardly suppose that any part of them was to be ascribed to his valour; or his skill. You are even in doubt if fame herself has not mistaken in attributing to him such great actions.*

What a spirit of piety, what a constant acknowledgment of the agency and goodness of Divine Providence, breathes thro' all his public addresses to his army, to his fellow-citizens, to Congress!—Ah! how difficult is it to receive the applause of nations with humility! to be exalted almost to heaven on the voice of fame, and not to feel that elation of mind, which raises a mortal above the lowly place which every creature ought to hold in the presence of Almighty God! Something there is in the command of armies, where one man wields the force of thousands, in the tumult of battles, in the splendour of triumphs, that is apt to intoxicate the heart, and to elevate it beyond itself. But this great general, after his victories, was always found modest and humble before the throne of the Eternal. Like Moses, in the presence of God, he alone seemed not to be conscious of the splendour that surrounded himself.† The same veneration for religion, and the same profound respect for its institutions, marked all his private deportment: And we have seen with what a serene and steady lustre his hopes from it shone in the concluding scene of life.

* *This was said also of the Marshal Turenne.*

† *Ab. Flech. orais. funeb. Mar. Tur.*

The talents of this great citizen we have now to exhibit in a new light—as a LEGISLATOR---and the CIVIL CHIEF of the American confederacy.—If it affords a subject less brilliant to the orator than his military career, it is not less instructive to mankind.

Scarcely had he begun to enjoy his beloved repose when the imbecility of that system, under which the states had originally confederated, discovered itself by so many pernicious consequences, destructive of national honour and prosperity, and dangerous to national existence, that it became necessary to frame a government invested with greater energy, more justly balanced, and able to act more directly upon all parts of the Union. This necessity his penetrating judgment had long foreseen, while he was yet commander of the army, and the wisdom of giving a new form to the confederacy he had frequently urged. America, always enlightened, and wise, even in the midst of her errors, resolved, at length, to pursue this sage policy: And Washington, whose prowess in the field had so conspicuously contributed to establish her liberty, was the first among that band of patriots who met to render it secure by placing it under the protection of the most admirable laws. Here he displayed the talents of a great legislator, and proved himself to be as wise in council, as he had been glorious in arms. The excellence of that constitution which was the illustrious fruit of their labours, and which republican France, in repeated efforts, has, hitherto, vainly attempted to imitate, has now been confirmed by the happy experience of ten years. Public credit has been restored---industry has received a new spring---commercial enterprize is extended to every spot upon the globe---agriculture flourishes---towns and cities are daily founded, extended, and beautified---population and riches increase---and even the debts of the revolutionary war are converted into a species of wealth.

But, antecedently to that experience which now justifies its wisdom, the name of WASHINGTON was necessary to give it authority, and to recommend it to the confidence of the American people. By their unanimous voice, throughout a region of fifteen hundred miles in extent, he was called to hold the first magistracy in

the confederated republic.——Merciful God! what a felicity to my country, that this revered and beloved citizen was yet preserved to assume, with his firm and resolute hand, the helm of government in such a perilous and doubtful season! Inestimable patriot! who wast willing to put to risk a reputation which it was believed, already above all addition, could only be diminished by any change. Ah! thy fellow-citizens were ignorant of the full extent of those talents which they have since beheld, with astonishment, as great in peace, as in war, in deliberation, as in execution---One of the noblest acts, in a life full of illustrious actions, was the resolution to stake his unexampled fame, and to employ the whole force of his unbounded popularity, to rescue his country from the degraded and imbecile state into which it had fallen under the old system, and to give an operation, and efficiency, that would overcome all opposition, to a government which he regarded as essentially connected with its prosperity and glory.

On this high and untried office he entered with that modesty which is one criterion of great minds, and which marked his whole character through life---he executed it with that unshaken firmness which is the result of conscious rectitude, of ripe and wise deliberation, and of the imperious sentiment of duty in a virtuous heart. Less splendour and eclat, indeed, attend the retired labours of the cabinet, than the march of armies, the capture of towns, and the triumph of victories; but often they require talents of a superior kind, and often possess an influence more extensive on the felicity of nations.

Under his administration, the United States enjoyed prosperity and happiness at home, and, by the energy of the government, regained, in the old world, that importance and reputation which, by its weakness, they had lost.---Arduous was his task---innumerable were the difficulties he had to encounter, from the passions, the conflicting interests, the ambition, and the disappointments of men. His own virtue, and the confidence of the nation, supported him. And, amidst all the clamours which the violence of faction, or individual chagrin, have raised against the general administration, none have ever dared

to impeach the purity of *his* patriotism, or *his* incorruptible integrity.

His retreats at Mount-Vernon, grown so dear to him by inclination, by habit, and by that love of repose natural to advancing years, he had forsaken only to serve the republic, and to give, to a new and untried government, a firm tone, and a steady operation. At the expiration of the first period of his magistracy, therefore, he was desirous of returning to that private life which was dearer to him than all things else, except America. Ambition had no charms for him. His felicity was to see his country happy; and his modesty led him to hope that her happiness might now be equally secure in other hands. All true Americans, at this moment, resisted his inclinations with the most affectionate importunity; and he was persuaded to resume the arduous cares of the state.

The crisis was important. An universal war raged in Europe, and was carried on with the most rancorous and exterminating passions. The hostile nations, inflamed against each other with a fury beyond all former example, for they fought for their existence, would scarcely endure a neutral. America was, every moment, threatened, by force, or by intrigue, to be drawn into the vortex. Strong parties in her own bosom rendered the danger more imminent; and it required a government firm, temperate, but inflexible, to prevent the evil. This great and heroic magistrate, charged with all her foreign relations, was not to be moved from her true interests. His object was America. And her interest, in the midst of this terrible conflict of nations, was to remain in peace. Faction at home, and intrigue and menace from abroad, endeavour to shake him--In vain--He remains serene and immoveable in the storm that surrounds him. Foreign intrigue he defeats--foreign insolence he represses--domestic faction, dashing against him, breaks itself to pieces. He meets the injustice, indeed, both of Britain and of France, by negociation, rather than by a precipitate declaration of war; but maintains towards them that firm and commanding attitude which becomes the head of a free and great republic. He obliges them to respect him; and preserves the tranquillity of his

country. As an American, he knows no nation but as friends in peace, in war as enemies. Towards one he forgets ancient animosities when it is useless to remember them. Towards another he renounces a chimerical gratitude when it is claimed only to involve us in fruitless calamities; perhaps, to put into their hands a dangerous empire over our own, and over other nations.

And now, my countrymen, behold, in the prosperity that surrounds you, the happy effects of this wise policy. See the desolated regions of Europe—compare their endless revolutions, their ferocious tyrannies, their murders, their massacres, their brutal violations of virgin honour, and conjugal fidelity, their wasted plains, their plundered cities, with our peaceful and flourishing state; and bless the memory of Washington, to whose prudence and magnanimity, shall I not say in spite of *yourselves*? you owe it. Had not his firm patriotism, and his sage counsels prevailed, what might not have been our present condition? I tremble to imagine it. We might, by the audacity of foreigners, have been stripped of the power of self-government—we might have looked only on pillaged towns, and a desolate shore—we might have seen the sacred asylum of our families polluted with lust and murder—we might have been the prey of civil discord—we might, like the wretched inhabitants of Saint-Domingo, have been the dreadful victims of domestic treason.—Unhappy the nation who permits a more powerful foreigner to obtain an ascendant in her councils!

Let me not forget that, amidst his cares for our foreign relations, he chastised and repressed the inroads of the savage tribes upon our frontiers, by the arms of the gallant Wayne. And, when rebellion dared to raise an impious front against the laws, he infused new energy into the government, by the promptitude and decision with which he crushed it.

To recapitulate, in one word, the events of an administration as wise as it has been successful—public credit has been restored—public peace has been preserved, notwithstanding the most powerful efforts to disturb it—domestic faction has been kept under control—foreign intrigue and insolence have been defeated and re-

pressed---foreign nations have been compelled to respect the republic---its power has been increased---its resources have been multiplied---a savage war has been terminated---rebellion has been punished---the laws have been strengthened-- and energy and stability have been infused into the government.

With this wise statesman it was an invariable principle of policy, that we can never be secure against the injustice of foreign nations while we do not possess the power of commanding respect, and punishing aggression. Weak entreaties, pusillanimous concessions, only invite indignity: For, unfortunately, *power* is *right* in the morality of republics as well as of kings. The defence of our commerce, therefore, the fortification of our ports, and the effectual organization of our military force, were objects towards which he ever directed a solicitous attention.

Behold, then, this illustrious man, no less sublime as a statesman, than as a warrior! His character is a constellation of all the greatest qualities that dignify or adorn human nature. The virtues and talents which, in other instances, are divided among many, are combined in him.

Having rendered such invaluable services to the state, and accomplished every object for which he had re-entered into public life, his desire to return to privacy could no longer be resisted. A second time he gave the world the great and rare example of voluntarily descending from the first station in the universe, the head of a free people, placed there by their unanimous suffrage, and continued there with a zeal only not idolatrous, to the rank of a plain and simple citizen, obedient to those laws which ambition would have placed its glory in controlling. The pride of reigning he despised. Its labours he endured only for his country. And, when he could, he cast it from him as a bauble to which his soul was superior.

On Mount-Vernon he enjoyed his family and his virtue; but still prepared to sacrifice all his dearest predilections whenever his beloved country should demand his aid. Unfortunately, it was too soon required. The injustice of a foreign nation had compelled her to arm;

and he was coming forth to defend her under the shade of those laurels which he had gathered in her service. —But the Ruler of the Universe, the God of Armies, had otherwise determined.---Ah! in what an eventful crisis of the world---in what a dubious and alarming moment for America, hath she lost her hero!---Great God! thy councils are inscrutable!

He died as he had lived, with that serenity of mind, and that composed fortitude, which had ever distinguished his character. Death has no terrors to a pure soul which already derives its supreme pleasures from virtue. There are ardent and impetuous spirits who can affront death in the field, who are not able to regard it with a calm and steady eye in the thoughtful scenes of retirement, and under the pressure of disease. The fire and tumult of battle transport them beyond themselves ---honour impels them---and the observation of thousands imparts to the mind an artificial force. But, in the silent chamber, where no foreign impulse supports the heart, and it is not sustained by a consoling retrospect on life, they often shrink from the idea of dissolution, and of the destinies of eternity; and those who seemed to be more than men in the terrible hour of conflict, have been seen to be less than men upon the bed of death. Our hero was the same in that moment as in all the past ---magnanimous, firm, confiding in the mercy, resigned to the will, of Heaven. Ah! with what beauty does religion shine in the concluding scene of such a life! How precious the hope of immortality in such a moment!——Rising on his own faith, and on the prayers of millions, to the throne of the Eternal, he receives in Heaven the reward of those illustrious services to his country, and to human nature, which could never be paid him upon earth.*

Such in peace and in war, in private and in public life, was that illustrious man whom all America this day

* *Answer of Congress to his speech on resigning his office of commander in chief.*

mourns, whom foreign nations lament, and whom the most distant time shall crown with continually new praises. If I have not been able to rise to the dignity of my subject, I have, at least, endeavoured to discharge the office of a good citizen, in paying my homage to the departed father of his country. Other orators will rise to do him justice—history will preserve the remembrance of his great qualities to the remotest ages—his memory will forever be his highest eulogy.

The praise that is now paid to such distinguished merit can no longer be suspected of adulation. The universal impulse of the nation dictates it—the first magistrate of America, the friend of Washington, in a style worthy himself, and worthy his great copatriot, has given the example of it*—the supreme Legislature of the Union have decreed him the noblest honours—communities and individuals vie with one another in the testimonies of their respect and veneration. It is a great republican duty to crown with honours and with eulogies pre-eminent merit, and public services. Glory is the only reward which is worthy free states to bestow, or patriots to receive. All others, seizing on the principles of avarice, vanity, or pleasure, render the love of country only a secondary passion. The rewards of glory, to which sublime souls have always been devoted, still leave our country to be the first object in the heart. They are the *homage* which nations pay to superior virtue. Egypt, by her funeral panegyrics, first taught the world the influence of posthumous glory to create wise magistrates, illustrious heroes, and virtuous citizens. Greece, by the aid of her laurel and her ivy, of her statuary and her painters, and above all, of her historians and her orators, rendered her citizens the admiration and the envy of the universe. Letters are more durable than marble. Long since, the monuments of Trajan and Agricola have perished; but the glory of the one, and the virtues of the other, shall exist forever, embalmed by the genius of Pliny and of Tacitus. Yet, brass and marble shall not be wanting to record his fame. A mon-

* See the President's answer to the address of condolence presented by the Senate.

ument, worthy a great nation, shall rise to him in the new capitol, that, like the capitol of Rome, shall be the centre of a universe of its own. Yield excellent Lady! who hast already known how to make so many sacrifices to thy ocuntry, yield to her solicitations his precious remains, that, laid at the foundations of those walls whence issue our laws, he may still seem to be the support of the republic.*

Oh! could I make my voice resound throughout the earth—could I support, by my genius, the grandeur of the subject, I would hold him out as a model to law-givers, and to princes. Heroes who place a false glory in overturning the peace and liberties of the world should learn from him wherein true glory consists, and restrain their intemperate ambition. His actions should instruct the universe.

Rulers of the new world! imbibe his spirit! govern by his example! It is then only that our tears for Washington can be dried up when we see his image revived in you. The grief that overwhelms us shall give place to the delicious tears of joy, when we see, springing from his ashes, so many illustrious and virtuous citizens, the ornaments and defenders of their country. It is by imitating only, that you can truly honour him, and perpetuate the image of his virtues. Let statues and paintings exhibit his noble port, express his manly countenance and convey to posterity the features of the man so honoured, so beloved by his cotemporaries, and who, by future ages, will forever be ranked among the greatest benefactors of mankind. But, it is not by a lifeless mould, or the chisels of art—it is not by the products of the quarry or the mine, that the soul of a patriot can be represented, but by his spirit, and his actions, transmitted to posterity thro' a succession of wise, brave, and virtuous, legislators, and heroes.

I cannot forbear to remark the singular felicity of that excellent citizen whose memory we honour by the ob-

* Since the delivery of this discourse we have been assured that Mrs. Washington has complied with the request of Congress. See her admirable letter to the President of the United States

sequies of this day. The malignant attacks of envy, which elevation and merit only provoke, he has almost wholly escaped. If faction has sometimes ventured to rear her head, and shoot out her sting against him, abashed by his virtue, she has instantly shrunk back, and retired into her own coil——He had read his fame in the histories of his own, and of other nations---He has enjoyed the suffrage of posterity---He has seen himself in that light in which he shall be contemplated by the remotest periods of the world---He has possessed ages of honour before his death.---Dying, his felicity has still followed him. Has the history of nations ever exhibited such a scene of voluntary honours, of universal affliction, of sincere and mournful homage?---Illustrious hero! deign also to accept the unfeigned homage of our grief! ——Friends of humanity and of liberty throughout the world! It is for you to weep. 'Tho' America was the favoured land which gave him birth, and is therefore entitled to be the first in grief, yet he was born for the human race.

While Washington lived, the people believed that their Guardian Angel was still among them. By the misterious and holy decree of Heaven he is taken from their vows and hopes in a moment when the tempest, that has so long beat upon the old world, threatens more and more to extend its fury to the new. Almighty God! all events, and the hearts of all men are in thy hands--save us from the calamities of war, and from the cruel designs of hostile nations, who may now gather presumption from the death of him who was accustomed to humble them! Save us from the curse of divided councils, which his influence tended to unite! Save us from the blind and intemperate rage of factious passions, which his presence has so often overawed! Confirm among the people that union of sentiment, and that submission to the laws, which have been so long aided by the commanding ascendant of his genius!——Our prayers are heard. Divine Providence which prepares those great souls who are the defenders and saviours of nations, will continue the succession of them, while those nations continue to respect religion and virtue---and, tho' Moses be removed, Johua shall be left,

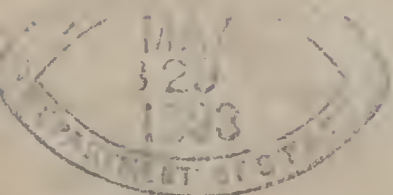
Finally, every thing serves to remind us of our departed and beloved chief, and to renew continually in our breasts the most afflicting, along with the most grateful, recollections. If the husbandman tills his lands, and calls them his own, have they not been gained by his wisdom and valour? Do we enjoy our hearths, and our altars, in peace? Have they not been purchased by his toils, and his dangers? There is not a village, not a field, not a stream which he has not stained with the blood of our enemies,* or where he has not inscribed on the earth with his sword the characters of American liberty.---Ah! by how many dear and tender ties does he hold possession of our hearts! Wives and mothers think they have lost him who preserved to them their husbands and their infants---the young think they have lost in him a father---fathers that *they* have lost more than their children---the republic that she has lost her founder, and her saviour---every citizen fears lest the peace, the union, the glory of America, is entombed with him.---No my fellow-citizens! This fear shall not be realized. Washington, tho' dead, is not lost. His ashes shall defend the republic that contains them---the capitol, that rests upon his remains, shall be immortal---his example shall live to instruct posterity---his virtues shall descend as a precious inheritance to future ages---the future lawgivers and rulers of America shall come to his tomb to reanimate their own virtues. And, if it be true that the wise and good, amidst the supreme felicities of their celestial existence, are still occupied with the cares, and sometimes made the guardians, of that which was the dearest to them upon earth, O spirit of Washington! will not thy beloved country still be thy care?

** This is almost literally true of all the middle counties of New-Jersey.*

NOTE.—Some readers may be inclined to think that eulogies bestowed in this discourse, are too exclusive. I am, certainly, not disposed to deny, but, rather, acknowledge with pride, that America possesses many great men, who co-operated with General Washington in establishing the liberties of their country: But panegyric

does not charge itself with apportioning the merit of others when celebrating an individual character. It is the province of history to compare, and definitely to mark the limits, of each one's virtues and services. There are living characters who will be entitled to the highest praise, when death shall have placed them beyond the reach of flattery, and exempted us from the imputation of it.





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